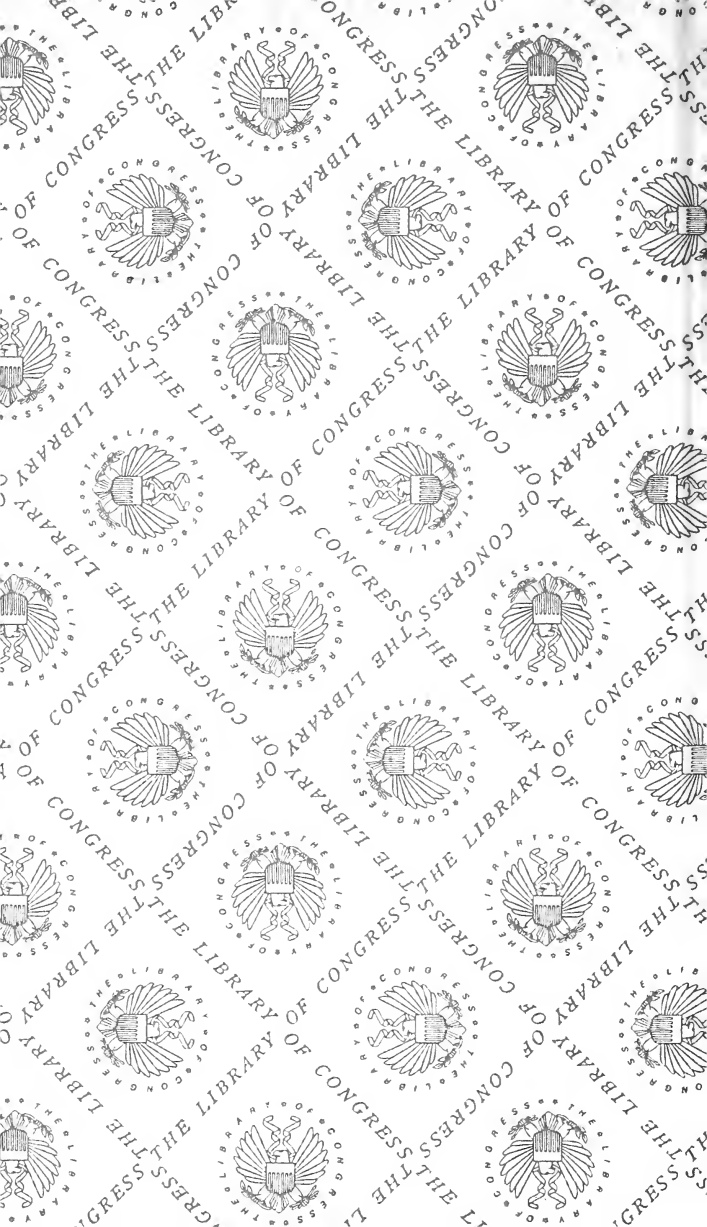
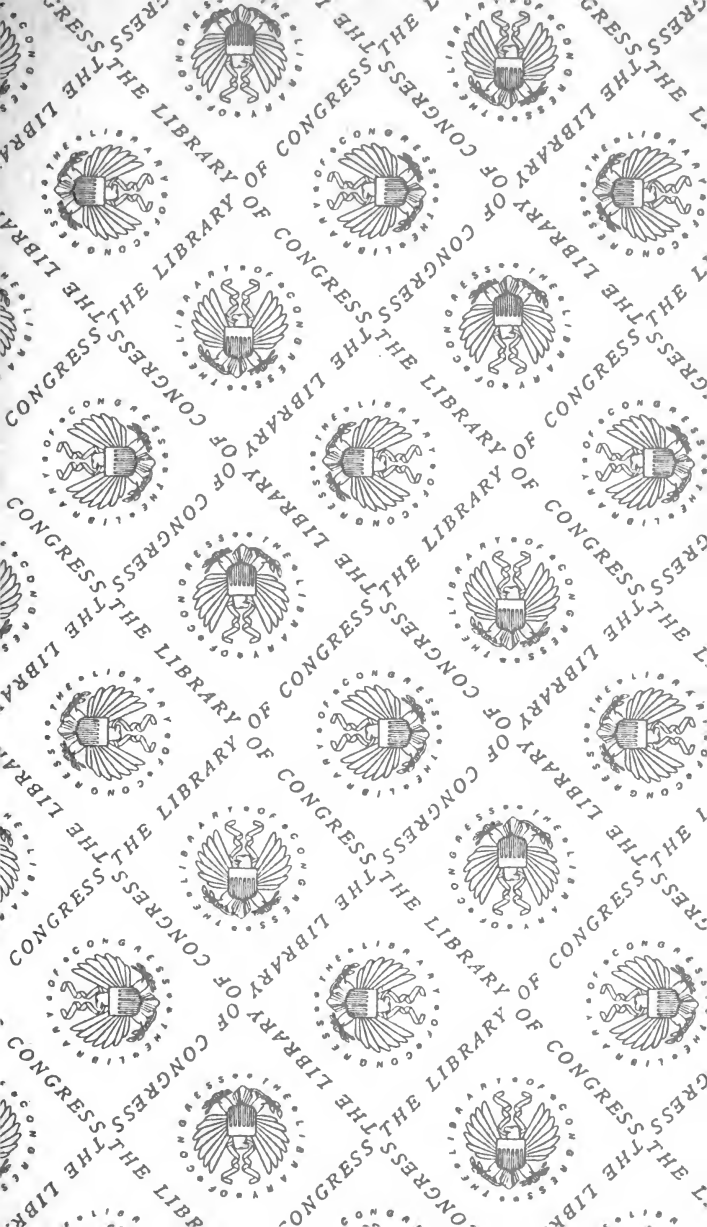


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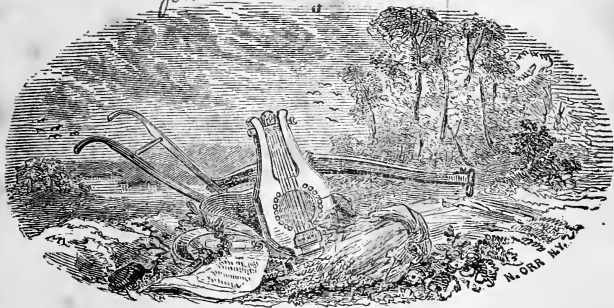


THE HARP AND PLOW.

BY THE

"PEASANT BARD."

Josiah D. Banning



Sing of NEW-ENGLAND, favored land!
Her customs dear—her social band—
Her everlasting hills that stand

Above her meads,
As when at first, by His command,
They reared their heads!—

VISION OF POESY, page 76.

GREENFIELD :
PUBLISHED BY M. H. TYLER.
1852.

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GREENFIELD:
C. A. MIRICK, PRINTER.

P R E F A C E .

GRATEFUL to an indulgent public for the favor extended to him in former publications of his poems, the author respectfully tenders the present revised selection.

To the arioso strains of the exquisite poet, or the unintelligible profoundness of the laureat bard, he neither inclines nor aspires. Content will he be should his readers discover a vein of homely but honest COMMON SENSE running through his pages ; and he begs those, supercritically disposed, to take into consideration the want of 'elegant literary leisure' in one whose daily life consists of the laborious whoa-haw-buck avocations of the farmer ; one who, in place of the classical toga of the scholar, is clad in the chequered garb of the plough.

It is while pursuing the labors of the farm, amidst the melodies of nature and her varied scenery of mountain, flood, and field ; it is amidst the vicissitudes of the seasons,—the shooting blades of spring, the leafy honors of summer, the gorgeous dyes of autumn, and the drift-bearing blasts of winter,—that the MUSE has blessed the author with her whispered inspirations. She saw him a scion of revolutionary patriots who 'sought with the sword placid rest under Liberty,' and bade him cherish their memory, and fan with Vestal vigilance the fire of

PATRIOTISM which warmed their own noble hearts. She saw him looking with pity upon the zeal of the fanatic, and with scorn upon the heart-sickening insolence of the vain and hypocritical, and taking him kindly by the hand, led him far from the one, and lifted him high above the other. She bade him bow with adoration only to the great GIVER of gifts, good and perfect,—the wellspring of Light, Liberty, and Happiness. She has wedded his Harp to his Plough, and in the stillness of seclusion has mingled for him the ‘sweet with the useful.’

Should the following pages serve faintly to picture to the citizen the simple beauties of rural life ; should they furnish entertainment for the leisure hours of his hardy brother farmer ; for the social group of the winter’s fire-side ; should they serve to beguile the lone hours of some wandering son of New England, and incite in his bosom endearing recollections of his native land ; should they wake devotion to his country in the honest heart of the patriot,—the most ambitious wish of the author will be attained.

JOSIAH D. CANNING.

GILL, FRANKLIN COUNTY, MASS.,

May, 1852.

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INVOCATION.

YE nymphs of song, ye spirits sweet, who haunt my native hills,
Ye who in tiny shallops glide down all their tinkling rills;
Whose voices soft at eventide, when mild is LUNA's beam,
One hears amid the willows green beside the lonely stream;—

Come from your mountain dwellings, those airy summits high,
That look into, and take their hue from out the azure sky;
And moor your fairy vessels, scooped from acorns of the tree,
And from your tuneful streams come up and listen unto me:—

Ye've given me a soul of song, ye've given me a lyre,
And touched a true New-England heart with patriotic fire;
And fain for thee, my country, would I strike an honoring strain,
And sing sweet Ash-u-e-lot's banks, and lift Mo-nad-nock's mane!

Ah, must that lyre in silence hang upon the willow bough!
My hand is heavy grown with toil, and calloused by the plough;
And when I lift it for a song, and out its numbers bring, [string!
How rude the touch, and harsh the note that struggles from the

When from 'the loop-hole of retreat' abroad I cast a look,
And see the candidates that FAME is jotting in her book;
And when I note the eager host that throng to catch her eye,
Faint is my heart, and small my hope her majesty to try.

Then oft, in reckless mood, I've thrown beside the plough-share
bright,

That lyre, resolved the furrows deep should hide it from my sight,
Determined never to attempt again the tuneful strain:

But when the plough came round about, up turned the lyre again.

Now, something in my breast has fixed the resolution strong
Henceforth to cherish-with my life the sacred gift of song ;
My country dear may lend an ear ; but e'en if she refrain,
I'll have *some* music on life's march, if but a private strain.

So be content, ye Nymphs of Song, around my ways to dwell ;
Tho' all unseen by common eyes, I'll mark your presence well ;
I'll see you on the tempest's blast, and on the zephyr's wing,
I'll hear you in the torrent's roar, and in the bubbling spring.

Up to the mountain's breezy top attend me as I go,
When calm the blue expanse above, and sweet the scene below ;
When Autumn lingers o'er the land in gorgeous tirc complete,
Her ' coat of many colors ' fine, and silver-shod her feet.

I'll note the farmer at his toil, the heavy burthened wain
That slowly wends its homeward way across the harvest plain ;
The cottages that dot the vale like scattered flakes of snow,—
'The homes of freemen, strong and brave,—inspire me these to show.

Aid me to paint the social joys that, when *Thanksgiving* comes,
Spring sweetly round the festive board in these New-England
homes ;

The tales about the blazing hearth, when evening bars the doors,
And hollow in the chimney-top the voice of winter roars.

Aid me to read my COUNTRY'S lore, so rich in classic themes :
Her mountains, forests, lakes, and vales, and Indian-christened
streams ;

While living, I will give to her the boon of my regard,
And dying, leave for her in love the blessing of a BARD.

THANKSGIVING EVE.

~~~~~  
“ They round the ingle form a circle wide.”—ROBERT BURNS.  
~~~~~

THANKSGIVING ! hail thy festive cheer,
Thou day to all New-England dear !
When Labor by his mattock throws,
And gives his toil-strained nerves repose ;
And Care, for want with whom to stay,
Goes off to have a holiday.
When scores of craking fowls must die,
To make the needful chicken-pie ;
And turkies, twirling at the fire,
Roast, as the de'il will roast a liar ;
And busy dames and lasses fair,
The Pilgrim's yearly feast prepare.
When Plenty gives from out her store
A dainty bit, to glad the poor,
And Want, with e'en his stingy grip,
Is lavish of his only fip.
When forge and smithy, shop and mill,
In Sabbath quietude are still,
And artisans of every grade
Are in their very best arrayed ;

And farmers, in their homespun own,
Would scorn the wardrobe of a throne.

Thanksgiving ! day of all the year !
Ancient and honored custom dear !
When foes with kindlier feelings greet ;
When friends, long separated, meet
To knit anew the ties that bind
Kindred to kindred, mind to mind.
When from the towers, in morning time,
Is wafted forth the tuneful chime ;
When all the true its call obey,
And tune their hearts to praise and pray,
And up to Zion's courts repair
To dwell upon God's mercies there.

To thee, thy sons, New-England, whom
Fortune allures abroad to roam,
Will oft revert, in times like these,
'Cross miles of land and leagues of seas,
And o'er again in memory live
Thanksgiving's blessed day and eve.

Silent, yet swift, the stream of Time
Goes surging down to Lethe's clime ;
And, swiftly as the current flows,
The Seasons pass to their repose.
Spring, from her gaudy shallop green,
Flings to the shore a flowery scene ;
And Summer, from her leafy barge,
Casts forth her mantle fair and large.

Next, borne upon a northern air,
Comes Autumn with her yellow hair.
Thro' all her shrouds the breezes blow,
Now wild and shrill, now lorn and low,
Proclaiming that 'abast the beam,'
Comes Winter, whitening all the stream.

The FARMER, with a careful eye,
Notes each successive passing by;—
The cold may chill, the heat may pall,
Still he's abroad to welcome all;
And when, at length, as now, has come
Autumn's last moon, and 'harvest home,'
Complacently he sees afar
In the cold north the wintry war,
And bides the advent of the storm
With thankful heart, and fireside warm.

Already has the sounding flail
Of harvest over told the tale;
The miller, o'er his hopper leaned,
With practised eye the seed has scann'd,
Declaring, as he stirs it o'er,
He scarce has seen as good before.
The flocks are gathered in their fold;
The herds protected from the cold;
The bees, within their waxen streets,
Are feasting on their treasured sweets;
And all things made secure and warm
That frost might seize upon to harm.

Now Phœbus, like a wearied wight
Who scarce can wait the coming night,
Cuts short the day, and hastes to rest,
Wrapped in the vestments of the west.
Now steals the hill-fox from his den,
Through piney wood or darksome fen ;
But pausing, ere he dares to prowl,
He lists afar the watch-dog's howl
Ascending from the vale below,
And with his bark defies his foe.

And now the night-created star
Is beaming from its height afar ;
And palely in the northern skies
The mystic signal-fires arise ;
For in mid heaven the moon displays
Her silver lamp of bleaching rays.
Here headlong down the rocky steep
The rill descends with chainless leap,
And chafing, in its fretful course,
Talks to the night in accents hoarse ;
There by the wide expanded stream
The kindling bonfires brightly gleam,
And o'er the ice the skaters glide
With rapid pace and darting stride ;
While Echo on the shore has lent
Her aid to youthful merriment ;
And merry bells along the road
Tell mirth is every where abroad.

Turn from the thronging streets of town
Where gas-lamps shine when suns go down,
And where, despite their magic wicks,
Full many 'kick against the pricks.'
Turn from the sound of viols sweet,
The measured tread of tripping feet,
Where pleasure, like a night-rule born,
Dies in the rosy flush of morn.
Turn ye within the cottage walls
When evening on Thanksgiving falls,
And doff your hat, and take a chair,
And be ye 'free and easy' there.
No compliments are strained to please ;
No forced politeness murders ease ;
No boorish coarseness mars a feature
Of common sense and right good nature.

O, blessed eve, to converse given !
O, foretaste of the bliss of heaven !
There's nothing wanting but a tongue
To sing it, as it should be sung.

The fire upon the hearth-stone glows ;
The circle wide before it grows ;
The tale is told, the song is sung,
Wit falls unstudied from the tongue.
The thought humane is cast abroad ;
The beggar on the frozen road,
The sailor on the stormy seas,
The Indian 'neath the leafless trees,

The child of Want, where'er he be,
This evening shares their sympathy,
And Pity, gentlest child of heaven,
Breaks unto these her blessed leaven.

The parents joy again to see
Their widely scattered family
At home with happy greetings meet,
Like pheasants, in secure retreat,
Whom winding horns, and coursing hounds,
Have frightened from their morning grounds ;—
Who dress their plumes, no missing one,
Forgetful of the 'slaughtering gun.'

In the arm-chair that fronts the fire,
There sits the patriarchal sire,
Dressed in his garb of youthful prime,
All for the love of olden time.
There's Christian hope and heavenly peace
In every feature of his face ;
There's strength, and fields of labor won
In oak-like arms and palms of bone ;
There's wisdom in his hairs of snow ;
There's honor on his lofty brow ;
His eyes with youthful brilliance shine,
While in his cue there's 'auld lang syne.'

The dame, good woman, by his side,
Just fifty years, this night, a bride !—

Some angel, or good spirit other,
Paint for me this New England mother !
Reader, think of perfection human,
And you'll be thinking of the woman.
Her placid face, her tidy cap,
The clean check'd apron o'er her lap ;
No friend of Fashion, like some daughters
Born midst New England's vales and waters.
Would they the fickle jade forsake
And this good grandame imitate !
The very heathen then should know
Of angels dwelling here below.

On either hand this ancient pair,
Are ranged the stalwart and the fair :
The daughter given to another
Who 'sticketh closer than a brother,'
And with him from a distance come
To spend Thanksgiving day at home,
And let her doting parents scan
Her wee edition of a man ;
The cousin, bright-eyed, buxom, merry,
Her cheeks the rose, her lips the cherry ;—
(Forbidden fruit ! so was the apple
That Adam easy found to grapple ;)
The comely youth to manhood grown,
No man of cloth, but nerve and bone ;
Of that true-hearted stock a scion,
That dauntless faced the British lion ;
Such as, New England, may thy God
Forever raise upon thy sod,

And wide their gallant branches spread,
Nursed by the ashes of thy dead !

See in yon chimney corner wide
A sanguine lad, his mother's pride,
A restless, romance-loving child,
Not wholly staid, nor wholly wild,
Preparing for to-morrow's sun,
The snowy wilds, and dog and gun.
There, as the bullets swift are rolled
And glowing, from his brazen mould,
His whispers to another tell
How by his aim some victim fell ;
How late the partridge he did win
Full half a furlong, in the glen ;
Or how the river-fowl in spring
His bullet crippled, on the wing ;
And skillful feats as strange as true,
Which he had done, and yet could do.

And here, too, is an elder son,
For years from home an absent one.
He hails from western lands afar
Where Fortune lifts her blazing star ;
Backwoodsman-like he gives a zest
To all the romance of the West,
And with a spirit-stirring air
Tells of his wild adventures there ;—
The hair-breadth 'scape from bloody death
What time he stopped the panther's breath ;

How, camped one night beyond the border,
His bed-mate was the mas-sa-sau-der,*
And dreaming of some danger nigh
He woke to hear its 'larum cry.
Or how some guardian angel's hand
Brought safe his frail canoe to land,
When in the dark and hollowed wave
The howling demon scooped his grave ;
What scenes his sinking thoughts beguiled
When wildered in the dismal wild ;
How the dark, pensive Indian chief
Came to him, like a drifting leaf,
In silence heard his grievous tale
And took the wanderer in his trail ;
O'er mazy miles, with tireless pace,
Guided him to the wished-for place
As straight as flies the homeward bee,
Nor sought, nor would accept a fee.

And there is seen a *pauvre* neighbor,
Worn out with care and thriftless labor,
Invited to enjoy a treat,
And with his bitter mix a sweet.
This night his grateful heart o'erflows ;
Unwonted cheer dispels his woes,
And kindly notice makes him vain—
He feels himself a man again.

* A species of the rattlesnake ; so called by the western Indians.

His youthful days return anew,
His visions and possessions, too ;
Tells what he was and *might* have been
Had not *that nonplus* come between
Himself and the desired thing,
And made a subject of a king.

Sweet vision of domestic bliss !
Hath eye seen aught surpassing this ?
Could bard or painter who would dress
A scene of human happiness,
'Mongst the few patterns of the kind
Exemplar more befitting find ?

Vision of Peace ! beneath the tree
And palmy boughs of Liberty.
How well these social scenes contrast
With days of wo and peril past !
Befitting time—Thanksgiving Eve—
A patriot's lessons to receive !

The grandame speaks : her numbers tell
The memories which her bosom swell ;
She paints afresh days long ago
When wives were left with firesides lone,
To hear the booming battle-gun
And think of husband or of son ;
And wait, with longing and with fear,
Of victory or defeat to hear ;
Nerving their hearts to learn that they
Were mourners from that woful day.

The grandsire is discoursing, too ;
Himself one of the lingering few
Like land-marks showing, when we gaze
On revolutionary days.
A martial ardor fills his eye
When pointing back to times gone by ;
For though grey-headed, just, and good,
His veins are filled with ' soger ' blood :—
He counts his father's cuts and scars
Received in old colonial wars ;
And hums the air some soldier made
When Wolfe on glory's bier was laid.
The verse uncouth, and faulty rhyme
Blend with an old heroic chime.
His father loved it for the sake
Of memories it was wont to wake,
And aye would sing it when he told
Of Wolfe so brave and Montcalm bold.

He lights his pipe ; and next proceeds
With revolutionary deeds ;
Which, like the man in Trojan cause,
' He saw, and part of which he was.'
Tells many facts with interest rife
Connected with that noted strife
Ne'er honored with historic pen ;
Names dates, and places, arms and men ;
Tells of his feelings when his gun
He levelled first at Bennington,
And felt upon his cheek the breath
Of swift-winged messenger of death ;

With feeling lingers for a time
On Andre's fate, and Arnold's crime ;
And dwells upon the soldier's woes
At Valley Forge, midst winter's snows.

List to the veteran ! he extends
A benediction to his friends :—
Remember, next to Heaven's Throne,
Your country claims you as her own.
To one is adoration due ;
The other asks devotion true.
Thanks to the God of Battles ! now
Before no other king ye bow ;
No other king you'll have if ye
Do not abuse your liberty,
Nor lose in party's bitter waves
Your fathers' altar, and their graves.
New England points her every son
To Bunker's height and towering stone :
Beneath is patriotic dust ;
Above the changeless God, and just ;
And bids his aspiration be,
' GOD and my COUNTRY, now and aye !'

Unheeded, thus the moments fly ;
And every hour that dances by
Prolongs the social scene ;
As when we read, and love to learn,
Each page we scan, each leaf we turn,
A new delight we glean.

The king in state upon his throne
May wish the sun in heaven gone,
 May curse the wakeful moon ;
Compared with him, how blest are they
To whom Time's flitting pinions play
 A sweetly moving tune !

Now goes around the farmer's cheer,
Fresh from the garner of the year :—
Autumnal fruits of choicest savor,
The old brown mug of pleasant flavor ;
 And, lo ! the Muse awakes !
Oh ! reader, not the classic jade
Who serves her time, and does by trade
 What nature better makes.

As when, in olden time, at feasts
Where lords were hosts, and knights were guests,
Returning from the boisterous chase,
Or battle's grim and gory place,
 Around the board they drew ;
Then while the banquet scene inspired,
And every loyal heart was fired
 Its prowess to renew ;
The bard was summoned, to prolong
The glories of the day, in song,
 And of its hero tell ;
And loud the plaudits, as he sung,
Among the midnight echoes rung,
 And high his sounding shell.

So now around our humbler board,
Altho' no knight, or lofty lord,
Or laurel'd bard are seen ;
Yet there are hearts as brave and true
As e'er from titled scions grew,—
By nature nobler, e'en.

And one who learned his harp to string
In the green fields, in time of spring,
When music from the tuneful bough
Beguiled his labors at the plough ;
Who learned to strike a rural key,
When sweetly o'er the faded lea
The Autumn wind breathed slow and clear
Its requiem for the dying year,—
Essays a song ; attention give
And hear the story of the eve :

LEGEND OF THE ISLE.*

Is there a man who loves a marvelous tale—
Some dreamy legend of enchanted lands,
As loves old *Tantivy* October ale,
Or I our river and its silvery sands ?
Lend such attention as that tale demands.

The efforts of the muse less notice claim ;
The faltering chords bespeak her awkward hands.

Wrapped in her homely robe, with progress lame,
She slowly takes the path which others run to fame.

* See Note A.

Let learned muses wander, for a theme,
In Orient lands and fields of classic lore ;
Mine draws her subject from her native stream,
And strikes her harp upon its pleasant shore.
In artful plumage neither will she soar
To taste the spring which Helicon distils ;
Dearer to her the vine-clad cottage door,
Whose threshold-seat the evening minstrel fills,
And hears his echoed strains among the neighboring hills.

And thou, Connecticut, whose waters first
Baptised thy minstrel a New England born !
Purest of streams ! yea, pure as those that burst
From the sweet well-springs of the realms of morn
And fab'lous Fancy's flowery meads adorn.
I think on those, when musing o'er thy flow,
Who wrought in boyhood in thy fields of corn ;
Some, distant far, pursuing Fortune go ;
Some, in a sailor's grave, sleep Ocean's waves below.

Say, has the rover from thy shores so free
Found realms thine own in beauty to outvie ?
Did not thy dying 'wanderer of the sea,'
He who with noble firmness e'en could die,
Recall thy scenes with memory's vivid eye,
And sigh to think he'd view them never more !
Roll seaward, waters, where his ashes lie
Whose memory consecrates for me thy shore ;
And blend your lays with mine your noblest to deplore !*

* See Note B.

I.

Few but have heard of famous Captain Kidd,
He who for plunder sailed upon the sea ;
Of all the many wicked acts he did,
The which to tell were ill-befitting me ;
And how, at last, he ' hanged upon a tree,'
When Justice overtook him in his crimes ;
And in a song gained immortality ;—
His name I mention in my marvelous rhymes ;
I sing of ancient men, a tale of olden times.

II.

Go view the scene of action whence I draw
The theme which constitutes my faithful lay ;
Near where a *prophet bard* a vision saw,
And sang about it in a by-gone day,
An Island rises in the stream midway ;—
A lonely isle, where spirits of the drowned,
Forgetful of their homes, may seem to stray,
Wet from the chiming waves, whose drowsy sound
Plays dirges round the shores of their enchanted ground.

III.

Oft, when a boy, by Fancy led to stray
Alone along the river's leafy shore,
What time the musk-rat left his haunts to play,
And all the labors of the day were o'er,
How loved I on the darkening scene to pore !
How sweet on yonder isle was closing day,
Among the noble elms I see no more !
Stern maledictions choke my pensive lay :—
Frost nip the villain hands that cut those elms away !

IV.

To yonder isle, for years it was believed,
Kidd once ascended with his bandits bold,
And, gluttied with the spoils they had achieved,
They buried there a chest containing gold ;
And by tradition, indistinct, 't was told .

How on that chest a chosen brave they slew
To guard the treasures in their iron fold.

From fiction it may be, the story grew
And what remains to sing I do not vouch is true.

V.

Upon our shores, far back in other years,

There lived a simple-minded, worthy soul ;

His life a constant round of hopes and fears,

As one alternate on the other stole ;

He might have ' drowned his sorrows in the bowl ;'

His hopes, poor man ! he might have cherished there ;

But how to reach bright Zion's blessed goal,

Was, after all, 't was thought, his chiefest care ;

And now of heaven's joys no doubt he has his share.

VI.

A thin, spare man he was, of anxious look,

Of stooping figure, and of middling size ;

A strict old-fashioned reader of the Book,

Yet one not blessed with unclouded eyes ;

The one dim talent it was his to prize ;—

Believer he in ' signs,' in lucky stars ;

Was always clad in antiquated guise ;

Lacked both the courage and the force of Mars ;

And always came off vanquished in domestic jars.

VII.

Such was the man the hero of our song ;
A superstitious being, fond of talk,
Who would beguile the snowy evenings long
With deeds of those who forth ' at midnight walk
To bathe in brains the murderous tomahawk ;'
His own experience, too, he'd linger o'er,—
How witches used his choicest plans to balk,
To blast his crops, and haunt his barns before
He nailed the horse-shoe fast above the folding door.

VIII.

One night this dreamer on his pallet lay ;
His limbs were weary but he could not sleep ;
He pondered o'er the hardships of the day,
How very sore it was to stoop and reap
When burning suns slow thro' the heavens creep ;
To glean a living with unceasing toil,
While favored ones their slavish minions keep
To till for them the fructifying soil ;—
Till with ungenerous rage our hero's blood did boil.

IX.

O, why should Fortune on a few bestow
Her shining treasures, with a lavish hand ?
Fill up their coffers till they overflow,
And turn to gold for them the very sand ;
And crown their worthless names with titles grand ?
While the poor man, to ceaseless sorrow born,
Sees Ruin's taloned whelps around him stand,
Himself defenceless in their midst, forlorn,
Moaning a prayer for pity, but exciting scorn.

X.

O, is there not for me some gift in store
Shall heap with yellow gold my empty board !
How would my heart the giver good adore !—
(Rather than mammon may he be the Lord !)—
As never yet a being was adored.

How often, then, for charitable deed,
Should beggars' blessings on my head be poured !
The child of Want should on my bounty feed,
And humble worth no more a generous patron need.

XI.

The purse-proud fool, who scarcely heeds me now,
Should wither at my look of cold disdain ;
Respectful friends should in my presence bow,
And slaves be proud to wear their master's chain—
He who could make them, and unmake again ;
A lordly pile should fill the wishful eye
Where now a cottage peeps above the plain,
And stranger passengers, when going by,
Should stop and ask his name, who built yon mansion high.

XII.

Such were the thoughts that filled our hero's head,
As night apace on circling moments flew ;
No wonder, then, that sleep his pillow fled,
Since such bright visions for the while seem true.
But, oh ! they wither faster than they grew !
Hard 't is for man his destined lot to shun,
To leave the road that he must stumble through ;
Youth is the rising, age the setting sun—
The evening often closes as the morn begun.

XIII.

Sudden a fancy fired the schemer's brain,
Bright, e'en at first, and growing still more fair ;
He felt at once a respite from his pain,
And gave a free discharge to every care
Save the bright castle building in the air,
His sanguine ravings waked his ancient bride
Who heard the oath that he unconscious sware,
And deemed her good man did the night-mare ride
Through some infernal place, where demons foul abide.

XIV.

Morn rose at last above the eastern chain
Of hills, that mark the river's winding way ;
Connecticut, that stole beneath the plain,
Gave to the air her misty mantle grey ;
And bared her silver bosom to the day.
Up sprang the black bird from her dewy nest
And warbled sweet aloft her early lay ;
While hark'ning puss his playful mate caress'd,
And Summer smiled around, in all her verdure dress'd.

XV.

Now in these days, upon the neighboring shore,
There lived a man of whom strange things were told ;
A wizzard, at the least, if nothing more,
Who could the darkest mystery unfold,
And for whose soul the de'il a writ did hold ;
For thus did gossips of the day declare :—
He for the subtle art the same had sold ;
And when he died, the Regent of the Air
Would come to claim his own, and take him, 'hide and hair.'

XVI.

If sheep were missing from their wonted fold,
Or roosts were plundered, would the loser go
And see the conjuror, he might be told
About his loss, and how effected, too,
Before himself had said that it was so!
'Tis true, some hinted it was plain to see
Why the old man should all about it know;
But others thought it still a mystery,
For fortunes, too, he told, and like strange things did he.

XVII.

Scarce had the thirsty sunbeams drank the dew,
Save where it lay beneath some leafy screen,
When, to consult the conjuror, *Ballou*,
Our hero issuing on his way was seen,
With bold determination in his mien.
He with his shadow seemed to run a race;
(And what a shadow was the goal, I ween!)
Hope lit the rigid features of his face,
And oft his gesturing arm bespoke the mental chase.

XVIII.

When doting man is led by meteor whim,
What bright successes on his thoughts await!
He deems the world was made alone for him,
And he the spared favorite of fate,
Whom Heaven journals 'good,' and Nature, 'great.'
So Jack, that bears the phosphorescent fire,
Deludes at night the poor inebriate;
He sees at last the faithless lamp expire,
And bides a wretched time in fathoming the mire.

XIX.

At length upon a hermit-cottage door,
The good man did the scripture promise test ;
Cold perspiration ran from every pore,
And fear, with hope alternate, filled his breast,
As with a trembling hand the latch he press'd :
Slowly the door reluctantly gave way
To usher in the dark magician's guest ;
But, standing like a frightened deer, at bay,
He wist not how to act, and knew not what to say.

XX.

The light dim-struggling thro' the dingy panes,
Gave to the smoky walls a twilight hue ;
A wind-harp sang in melancholy strains
Whene'er without the passing zephyr blew
And softly stole the casement crevice through.
Beneath the window's dungeon-colored ray
A dark, unvarnished board was spread to view ;
Death's head and cross-bones in its centre lay,
Which, when our hero saw, he wished himself away.

XXI.

Beside the board, in antiquated chair,
The conjuror was seated at his trade.
He turned him round, and with a fixed stare,
From head to foot his speechless guest surveyed,
Till a grim smile upon his features played ;
Then ope'd a volume huge of mystic lore,
Whose yellow pages Faustus might have made ;
And while he conned his uncouth lesson o'er,
The stranger heard a tongue he never heard before.

XXII.

Then lifting up his eyes from off the book
He on his guest a look of *science* threw :—
‘ He that would fish must firstly bait the hook ;—
No fishes nibble here until you do.’
Our hero took the hint, and forthwith drew
From out his fob the heart-case that he tanned,
When, years ago, a fatted ox he slew ;
Its contents o’er with wishful eyes he scann’d,
And dropped a part thereof into the wizzard’s hand.

XXIII.

Then with the air of one who breathless all
Awaits the footsteps of the fated deer,
He leaned for succor on the friendly wall
And listened to the language of the seer :—
‘ Adversity’s cold winds have blown you here !
So drifts a helmless hulk upon the seas ;
But let the thought your drooping spirits cheer,
The very wind that does the beggar freeze
Wafts others gaily on to honor and to ease.’

XXIV.

‘ Then let it blow !’ exclaimed our doting man,
Whose tongue, restrained, had burst aloose at last ;
‘ I’ll weather well the tempest if I can,
Whoever else may founder in the blast.
My colors, see, they’re nailed upon the mast !
The pirate’s crimson stain is on their fold ;
Come, look with wizzard ken into the past,
For by your subtle arts I would be told
Where bloody Kidd concealed that chest of glittering gold.

XXV.

The conjuror took his hazel wand in hand,
 And figured for a while upon the floor ;
 Anon his horoscope and globe he scann'd,
 Then fell to muttering his fancies o'er :—
 ' Boötes seems begrimmed with human gore,
 And fiery Mars with tenfold lustre burns !
 Dire meteors fly, and fearful brilliance pour ;
 Saturn, all greedy, for his children yearns ;
 And Juno to the earth her shapeless Vulcan spurns !'

XXVI.

Meanwhile, to every point from east to west
 His wand did like magnetic needle veer ;
 At length it halted, trembling to a rest.—
 ' *Bellum horrificum* !' cried the seer,
 ' The charmed treasure which you seek is near !
 Why nods to me the river-god his head ?
 Ah ! *cujus caput* ?—yes, I see it clear !—
 Hard by the spot where you were born and bred,
 The pirate's booty lies within its *island bed*.'

XXVII.

' Does it ? indeed !' again our hero spake.
 ' Somehow I must have dreamed as much before ;
 But, tell me, wondrous man, without mistake,
 The how, and when, I may obtain the ore ;—
 Here, take my meagre purse !—I would 't were more.'
 (O, bright anticipation ! in thy sun
 How melts the heart long frozen to the core !
 How freely forth the stingy pennies run
 When dollars are at stake, and guineas may be won !)

XXVIII.

So, while he spoke, the wizzard's face grew black,
And scowling o'er his book with earnest gaze,
He looked like hunter searching out the track,
Where doubtful signs his straining eyes amaze ;
Or, like a wrecker, peering thro' the haze,
When on the deep he hears the drowning cry ;—
He scann'd the changing moon, her ancient ways,
The pictured stars he read with curious eye ;
Then to his guest he spoke, and thus his sage reply :—

XXIX.

' There is a charm, which I can scarce dispel,
That holds the treasures which you would obtain ;
But harken to perform what I shall tell,
And, ten to one, you will not hear in vain ;
Depart therefrom, you 'll sing another strain !—
The fifteenth night, that from her sky serene,
September's moon shines on the harvest plain,
Rise from your bed the midnight hours between,
And seek the island shore all noiseless and unseen.

XXX.

' Upon its southern point there grows an elm—
It's braved the floods and storms for many a year—
Which pilots recognize with starboard helm
When up the stream their freighted barks they steer.
The midnight moon will shine upon it clear ;
Twelve paces from its base, by measure made,
The shadow of its forks will plain appear ;
Upon that spot descend with bar and spade,
For bloody Robert's wealth is underneath you laid.

XXXI.

‘Most horrid sounds and sights you’ll hear and see,
Which might the lion-hearted terrify,
But on your part let perfect silence be ;
All unconcerned your labors earnest ply,
Whatever fills your ear, or meets your eye ;
The golden treasures are by *silence* won ;
And should you speak, you’ll know the reason why.
Keep all a secret—tell it unto none ;
And now depart from hence, and see that all is done.’

XXXII.

With lightsome heart our hero left the spot
Where he such precious knowledge had obtained ;
The birds sang sweetly, but he heard them not ;
From viewing Nature’s charms his eyes refrained,
He saw them not—for all his thoughts were chained
Upon one mental and enchanting view ;
In wild anticipation he had gained
More than was buried by the plundering crew,
And treasure even more than far-famed Croesus knew.

XXXIII.

At length the hopeful journey and the day,
With him alike were tending to a close ;
But still from home content a while to stay,
Upon a neighbor hill a seat he chose,
That watched above the sleeping vale’s repose.
Like molten silver flowed the river there ;
That blessed *island* from its bosom rose,
Where he was soon the midnight feat to dare,
And free his heart and hands of all their cankering care.

XXXIV.

His pipe he lit. The vapor upward curled,
And, wreathing, wrought round his bewildered head ;
Its fragrance stole his senses from the world,
Save one fond thought by recollection led
To watch the treasures in their ' island bed,'
And half invoke a blessing on the seer ;
Till in his dreamy trance he fancied
The clink of dollars in his ready ear,
And woke enraged to find his nibbling sheep were near.

XXXV.

Shall I digress to sing thee, Indian weed !
And praise thy virtues, slandered tho' they be ?
The muse to thee before has blown her reed,
As many who have heard will witness me ;
But thou art welcome to her minstrelsy !
For she, who now about the smoker sings,
At times, without thine aid, how dull is she !
But let thine incense rise !—on glancing wings
Like birds from spray to spray, from thought to thought
she springs.

XXXVI.

Upon the hills—back in oblivious year—
That o'er the Indian Susquehannah frown,
While starving hunters cooked a slaughtered deer
A gracious spirit came from heaven down,
And first thy seed from her fair hands was sown.
'T was to reward them for a pious feat
She gave their duteous hearts this kindly cheer ;
For, deeming that she smelled their savory meat
They, fasting, offered her the choicest bits to eat.

XXXVII.

On pious deeds a blessing is bestowed.

Lo! when the grateful goddess left the place
A new-called herb earth's teeming bosom showed—
Great chief of all the vegetable race!
This, for thy origin, the Indians trace.

Sprung from such wondrous source, indeed, thou art!
For what can sooner smooth the rigid face

Or e'en than sleep more pleasant dreams impart,
Or better lift the while its burden from the heart?

XXXVIII.

But to our tale again. Day after day

The sun slow dragged his intervening rounds.
Meantime our hero's farm neglected lay;

Rank weeds deformed his once well-tended grounds;
His fences fell, his cattle leaped their bounds;

Their master, vexed with more important care,
And wholly occupied with *sights* and *sounds*,

Would frequent to the river-shore repair
To see if all was right, and no molester there.

XXXIX.

His wife oft chid him at this timely rate:—

'My dear! what, in the name of common sense,
Has taken such a hold on you, of late?

What plea have you to offer in defence
Of all your present sloth and impotence?

Rouse up, good man! bestir your lazy feet,
Or ruin sure will be the consequence;

Unless you labor what have we to eat?

For scarcely when we work the year's two ends will meet.'

XL.

‘Tis true good wife, we’re poor,’ he would reply ;
‘ Together we in poverty were wed ;
But let us never raise a murmuring cry
To Him who gives to us our daily bread ;
Besides, somewhere I’ve either heard or read
‘ Afflictions oft are blessings in disguise ;’
I doubt not, then, but we shall still be fed ;
Perhaps e’en at our door some blessing lies,
For One who cares for us far more than man is wise.’

XLI.

How easily may some contentment preach,
When secret hopes meanwhile inspire their tongue !
For even while the good man made this speech
A ragged urchin on his garments hung ;
And, as aside its sunburnt locks he flung,
My poor, unconscious, ragged boy, thought he,
How oft in care for thee my heart’s been wrung !
But Fortune smiles ;—to-morrow thou may’st be
Heir to such splendid wealth that kings might envy thee.

XLII.

That very night the good man left his bed,
And putting on the garments that he wore,
Deemed, while the silence answered not his tread,
He for the last time shut a poor man’s door.
Then silently he sought the river shore,
His stealthy footsteps making rapid stride ;
Besides the spade and iron bar he bore,
‘ The big ha’ bible, ance his father’s pride,’
He hugged beneath his arm against his beating side.

XLIII.

Still was the hour, and sweet the midnight scene ;
The moon that in the cloudless heavens shone
Sprinkled with pearls the dewy banks of green
As thick as grain by generous sower sown.
No sound was heard except the wavelet's moan,—
All else the dreadful silence of the grave,
Save when the otter, from his covert lone,
Sought in the stream his furry skin to lave,
And with a sportive plunge awokè the dimpling wave.

XLIV.

But he of whom I sing was soon afloat,
Viewing these glories with a heedless eye ;
Stern, silent spectres, watching for his boat,
His fancy on the island shore could spy,
Which seemed to menace him from drawing nigh.
Poor man ! how much he felt no mortal knows ;
Despite his hopes and expectations high,
He felt like wretch who to his exit goes, [shows.
When first through glittering files, the waiting scaffold

XLV.

But screwing up his courage to the test,
He on the haunted shore a landing made ;
And with a painful panic in his breast
The seer's instructions, one by one, obeyed :—
Twelve paces from the elm, by measure laid,
He found all as the conjuror had told ;
Then soon the turf was broken by his spade,
And anxiously he raised the fragrant mould,
While down his palid cheeks the perspiration rolled.

XLVI.

A gnarled root impeded his descent,
And seizing hold the same, in act to draw,
O, what a groan the horrid silence rent !
You might have heard his heart that beat in awe !
It seemed a dead man's arm, worm-gnawed and raw,
And from it gushed a stream of stagnant gore !
But, shutting hard his eyes on what they saw,
He mentally a prayer repeated o'er,
Then with renewed strength he fell to digging more.

XLVII.

Anon came slowly moving up the flood
A phantom boat, and near the island drew ;
The helmsman's headless trunk was spouting blood !
Like murderous demons looked the spectral crew,
As if intent some fearful deed to do !
The poor man's courage fled before the sight ;—
Upon his quaking knees himself he threw
And clasped the blessed volume in affright ;
Nor did he quit his hold till all again was right.

XLVIII.

But how should he obtain the ' root of evil ' ?
And wherewithal should he o'ercome his fears ?
We read ' wi' usqueba' we'll face the devil,'—
Our man resolved to test its virtues here,
For who but *Nick* himself, might next appear !
He raised the potion to his lips, and thought—
'T was not, indeed, forbidden by the seer ;
Enough thereof to drown his fears he sought,
Then moistening his palms, he like a Trojan wrought.

XLIX.

And now, a full half hour he wrought in peace,
With little to molest or make afraid ;
And soon he looked to see his labors cease,
For deep and wide was the descent he made.
Alternately he plied the bar and spade ;
Nor did he once a timely thought bestow
Upon the ponderous transfer, without aid.

Full oft in *weighty* matters is it so ;—
A sequel often shows we've much to learn and know.

L.

Sudden, loud yells terrific rent the air !
Horror possessed the poor man's soul anew ;
For, borne against the tide, a man-of-war
Around the bend below, came full in view
With bellying sails, tho' scarce a zephyr blew ;
The wail of wo, of agony the scream,
Mixed with fierce yells, and imprecations, too,
Rose from her gloomy decks ; and it would seem
As if the fiends of hell were sailing on the stream.

LI.

The digger leaned upon his spade amazed,
And pressed his hand upon his laboring brain ;
All speechless on the mystery he gazed,
Then rubbed his gloating eyes, and looked again,
The certainty thereof to ascertain ;
It melted into moonlight—it was gone !
And, slowly as it passed, a solemn strain
Yet, sweet as those by airy pipers blown,
Alarmed him with the wild enchantment of its tone.

LII.

He raised his bar on high, with reckless hand,
And plunged it down, scarce knowing what he did ;
It penetrated deep the moistened sand,
And rang beneath upon the ponderous lid,
And clinked the golden bars of Robert Kidd !
‘ By heavens ! ’tis here ! ’ the joyful digger cried ;
‘ O ! did I *speak* ? ’—(as recollection chid)—
While, with a sound like Turner’s thundering tide,
Forever from the spot the charmed chest did glide !

LIII.

Star of the morn ! whose dull, inconstant gleam
Is fading at the opening gates of day,
How fit an emblem is thy waning beam
Of hopes, once bright as was thy rising ray,
Now gone, like thee dissolved in light away !
Our air-built halls—how bright, yet how untrue !
Like the mirage, that with its fair display,
Oft landsmen in the cloud of ocean view,
Which, while thereon they gaze, fades into heaven’s blue !

The tale is told ; and *Luna*’s height
Proclaims the lengthened march of night.
Already locked in sleep’s embrace,
The ‘ sanguine lad ’ is on the chase ;
The ‘ pauvre neighbor ’ rubs his eyes,
And ventures sundry comments wise

Based here and there upon a word
By dint of winking he has heard.
The grandsire lights his pipe anew,
And calls the story very true,
For he had heard it years before,
Told by the digger, o'er and o'er.
The grand dame, hitching in her chair,
To give herself a wakeful air,
Yawns forth the question,—‘let us see !
He lost the money did’nt he ?’

Renewed once more the burning pile ;
And social talk is brisk the while.
A retrospect of life is made,
And future plans are careful laid.
Again is passed around the treat,
And tho’ not hungry, you must eat,
Nor make refusal of the cheer—
THANKSGIVING comes but once a year !
The watch-dogs from their kennel rouse
And think ’t is morning in the house ;
And, whining at the kitchen door,
Would greet their master as before.

In order next the hymn is raised ;
Their Father and their God is praised.
The key is struck, and joined to sing,
Sweet sounds the viol’s tuneful string ;
And while the notes in concord blend,
Old Hundred’s well known strains ascend :—

THE HYMN.

Father of all ! to Thee we raise
The feeble tribute of our praise ;
O, turn to us a willing ear,
And in Thy glorious heaven hear !

The ' times and seasons,' in Thine hand,
With plenteous gladness fill the land ;
And rolling years, as fast they move,
Proclaim Thy goodness, power, and love.

The blades of spring, the leaves of June,
The fostering sun, and ripening moon,
The searing frost, the mantling snow,
Thy wondrous skill and wisdom show.

Now, in the garner of the year,
Our hearts are warmed with bounteous cheer ;
And here, beside our festal board,
Be Thou, the Giver good, adored.

We thank Thee for a home, and friends,
For light and life Thy mercy lends ;
For rulers from oppression free ;
For this, the land of Liberty !

Thou wert our fathers' God, and Thou
The only one to whom we bow ;
Thus, to our children ever be,
The same, and they the same to Thee.

O, may New-England ever share
Thy smiling love, Thy guardian care !
Be Thou her guard, Eternal One,
While mountains stand, and rivers run.

The moon goes down ; the fire burns low ;
The ancient clock seems ticking slow,
And feebly, with its drowsy powers,
Is hammering out the morning hours.

The grandsire, with complacent look,
Bids some one hand the blessed Book.
Its precious page aloud he reads,
Then, kneeling, in devotion leads ;
Gives thanks that in communion sweet
They've been permitted thus to meet ;
And in befitting language prays,
That when on earth shall end their days,
To them may their THANKSGIVING prove
Eternal, in the realms above.

NOTES.

Note A.—There is an island in the Connecticut river, opposite the village of Gill, Mass., of some magnitude, known as “Kidd’s Island.” Its name originated in a tradition that Kidd, the noted pirate, once buried thereon a portion of his ill-gotten booty ; and this tradition is founded upon the death-bed confession of the pirate’s African cook, who stated, among other things, that a part of the crew once ascended the Connecticut a good distance in boats, and upon an island above the “great falls”—(Turner’s Falls?)—deposited an iron chest filled with gold and other indestructable precious spoils. Moreover, that after depositing the chest in the earth the crew cast lots among themselves, and the one upon whom the lot fell was slain upon the chest and his body buried with it. This bloody act was supposed to create a charm about the repose of the treasures ; and thus guard it from the avaricious attempts of future money-diggers.—However true the tradition may be, it matters not ; but certain it is that a believer in the buried plunder, many years since, after due consultation with a noted ‘conjuror,’ made actual attempt to obtain the treasures. Notwithstanding his sanguine hopes of success in the undertaking,—a naturally superstitious turn of mind, the midnight hour, the loneliness of the scene, and, above all, the awful *charm* which was supposed to enwrap the iron chest, completely bewildered the brain of the digger ; and to the day of his death he affirmed the truth of the mysterious and awful things said to have been witnessed by him while engaged in the unholy attempt ; and believed that his bar actually struck upon the lid of the chest ; and that had he not *spoken* in an unguarded moment, he should have rejoiced in the possession of the untold treasures.

The remains of the midnight excavation are still to be seen by any one who may visit the isle.

Note B.—The valley of the Connecticut has furnished an unusual number of seamen both for the commercial marine, and the naval service of the United States. Many of these, early cotemporaries of the writer, are “in the deep bosom of the ocean buried.” Particular allusion is had in this connection to the death at sea of Surgeon WILLIAM PITT CANNING, of the United States Navy, who fell a victim to the scourge of the tropics and devotion to his duty, on the awfully memorable passage of the sloop-of-war *Vandalia*, from Port-au-Prince to Norfolk, Va., April 7, 1845.—See lines entitled “My Brother’s Ocean Grave.”

LAYS OF A TWELVEMONTH.

JANUARY.

OLD Time, the tireless, in his book
Has turned a leaf anew,
And bent thereon his solemn look
To make a record true.
As fast successive years are told,
Do we grow wise as we grow old ?
Is wisdom to the man as coy
As when he was a little boy ?
Shall he no godlike lesson learn,
While, wheeling on, the planets burn,
And constant, in their wondrous play,
Light for his thoughts a loftier way ?

The woodman in some sheltering nook,
When haply Phœbus shines,
Hears far o'erhead the solemn airs
Among the shivering pines.
There seated, thoughtful and alone,
He takes his frugal meal,
And feels a sympathizing gloom
Upon his spirits steal ;

His dog, from many a fruitless search,
Comes to his master there,
And seems his gloomy thoughts to feel,
And would his dinner share.

From mossy trunks, with nervous arm,
He rears the ponderous load,
And slowly seeks his distant home
Along the dreary road.
The rising storm, from regions bleak,
May howl o'er him in wrath,
The furious squall and eddying drift
May blind the sledder's path ;
Still on he cheers his patient team,
He whistles, shouts, and sings ;
He's thinking of the pleasure that
The fireside circle brings.

At length, storm-beaten, to his door
His weary cattle come ;
His children peer the windows through,
And shout a welcome home ;
Gone are the labors of the day,
The beatings of the storm ;
His features soften to a smile,
Beside his hearth-stone warm.

A little child—her father's pet—
Is seated on his knee,
And hears about the squirrel's nest
Snug in the hollow tree ;

The winter-berries in his vest
She seeks, and calls them good ;
The woodman thought about his child
When in the lonely wood.

FEBRUARY.

O, WINTER ! unto those who feel
No creature-comfort unsupplied,
Whose garners swell with precious fruits
Of acres stretching far and wide ;
Whose vestments warm, and dwellings grand,
Thy fiercest howling blast withstand,—
Thy presence pleasure brings ;
The ride, the dance, the gay *soiree*,
The fireside circle's bright display
O'er joyless Nature flings
A veil, to hide her visage pale,
To stifle Want's heart-moving tale
Uprising from thy snows.
And though around the pampered form
Is girt the cloak of comfort warm,
The heart within, God knows,
Is cold and deaf ;—it has no ear
The plaint of misery to hear—
A supplicated boon ;
'Tis cold with selfishness, as now
Upon Monadnock's glittering brow
The light of winter's moon !

Think, favored ones, within the streets
So broad, where Plenty Pleasure meets,—
Think of the bye and lonely roads
That lead to Misery's abodes !
The hut, half-buried in the snow ;
The stolen fuel, burning low,
O'er which, in fear, some squalid form
Is crouched, its shivering self to warm ;
And mopes, and mopes, starts and stares,
Raves of its woes, and plots, and swears !
Think of the victim you might save
From prison glooms, from felon's grave ;
And lead, with timely aid bestowed,
On Virtue's heaven-seeking road.
Pray, favored ones, within whose door
The fierce temptations of the poor,
Barred out by Plenty, never come
Like fiends to desolate your home—
Pray, in the heart of winter-time,
For the poor child of Want and Crime.
Think of the cot on some bleak plain,
Where Winter's winds their strength unchain ;
Where whirling through the leaden skies
The smothering tempest madly flies !
There, hidden by the trackless snows,
Poor suffering Worth sustains its woes ;
Feeds spirit from the stores of faith,
While the poor body starves to death.

O, when will Heaven deign to give
To those who on its bounty live

And have thereof to spare,
A *feeling heart*, to cheer the sad,
To bless the good, to guide the bad,
And with the needy share !

MARCH.

SINCE Bryant touched his harp for thee,
And sang thee in his tuneful strains,
How feeble the attempt in me
To sing thy winds and chequered plains !

But still thy airs so freely blown,
Awake an answering chord ; to me
There's music in thy piping tone,
Thy *march* is full of melody.

Thou call'st the rabbit from her lair,
And wonder beams in pussy's eyes ;
O'er the flecked hill-side, wearing bare,
With thy mad winds a race she tries.

Yonder the smoky column gray
Is wreathing from the leafless wood ;
There the swart rustic boils away
The sugar-maple's limpid blood.

There in his lonely camp he stays
And keeps his hermit fire a-glow ;
And feels relieved when o'er him strays
The hailing, reconnoitering crow.

I mark yon early bird, and lone,
That plumes herself with idle bill,
Or tries a would-be merry tone
To soothe thy wild and wayward will.

The squirrel peeps from out his cell
When haply Phœbus warms the sky,
And hastes his moody mate to tell
Glad days are coming by-and-by.

And they will come ; e'en at thy heels
The lengthened hours of April tread ;
The earth her bubbling springs unseals,
And verdure vivifies the dead.

Wild month ! thy storm-encircled ways
Mind me how good men's lives are past ;
Clouds may begirt them all their days,
But sunshine glorifies at last.

APRIL.

THE winds are called ; and pleasant days
Are giving gladness now ;
They call the cattle forth to graze,
The farmer to his plow.

Upon the mountain's sunward side
The maple shows its buds ;
The elm begins its shadow wide,
And birches scent the woods.

The alder hangs its tassels out
Down by the water-side ;
Beneath the spring-enlivened trout
Like darting arrows glide.

The squirrel chatters on the bough,
The bird sings in the tree ;
Abroad is early roaming now
The honey-seeking bee.

At morn I saw a cloud like snow
Above the river lie ;
The day-beams chased it from below—
It vanished in the sky.

And so, like yon bright cloud, thought I,
Oft cherished fancies go ;
Dissolving, so they fade and fly,
As sure, but scarce as slow.

I saw at noon a passing shower
Steal o'er the landscape bright ;
It brought to mind a tearful hour
When looking for delight.

I saw above the sunken sun
Rich clouds in beauty piled ;
There, lingering when the day was done,
Reflected glory smiled.

So o'er the just, the good, the brave,
When all life's sails are furled,
Their virtues, clustering o'er the grave,
Still light a darkened world.

MAY.

THOU last, thou sweetest of the train
Of all the vernal sisters three ;
Whose vesture beautifies the plain,
Whose garlands rich bedeck the tree,
Whose melody,

Unwritten from the bush and bough,
Is music's own ;—thrice welcome thou !

How like art thou to life's young morn,
E'er passion's fires begin to glow !
E'er cares, like frosts, lay bare the thorn,
Or age makes pallid as the snow !

How like, I know,
To the bright morning of his day
Whose sun casts shadows o'er his lay !

The twittering swallows wake the morn
Beneath the hospitable eaves ;
The cock blows shrill his clarion horn ;
The robin, hid among the leaves,
Her tribute gives,

Pouring her song to hail the day,
So sweet, so sorrowfully gay.

The brooks run sparkling to the day,
The bloom of trees perfumes the air ;
The landscape with its rich array
Seems one Elysian region fair,
Beyond compare

To aught save fancy's land of dreams,
That with phantasmal beauty teems.

The harbinger of corn I heard
While furrowing the field to-day ;
The sweet prophetic planting-bird
Sang, perched upon the shaking spray,
His vocal lay ;
And, pausing o'er the plow to hear,
I answered thus the prattler dear :—

Sing on, sweet bird ! soon shall the corn
Upspringing from the ground appear ;
First will the spiky blade be born,
The tassel next, and next the ear,
And autumn sere
Shall heap upon the harvest plain
The ponderous sheaves of golden grain.

And on whose bounty shalt thou feed,
Meantime, who tell'st the time to plant ?
Come to my door in time of need,—
Thou shalt not for thy morsel want.
Say'st thou ' I sha'nt ?'—
Ah ! 't was thy neighbor of the bough
With dusky coat,—I see him, now !

Fair May ! thy very name implies
A power, but of a doubtful kind :—
We *may* ' shoot folly as it flies,'
Or we *may* be, indeed, too blind ;
And we *may* find
That hatred, hope, e'en love sincere,
Are tethered to the rolling year !

JUNE.

HAIL, beauteous June ! the twelvemonth's leafy prime !

Unstained as yet by summer's dust and heat ;
Art may not copy from the book of time
Thy living tableau pleasing and complete.

This glorious ' blue of June ' !—the morning skies
Unchequered by a single cloudy fleece.
From wood and hill, from vale and stream arise
Incense and anthems to the Fount of Peace !

I love to con the pictures in thy book,
O, moon of leaves ! all rurally displayed :
The grazing herd beside the clear, cold brook,
The green banks greener in the elmy shade ;

The woody mountain, in the distance blue ;
The valley where the sleeping waters shine ;
The lawn, the cornfield, emerald in hue ;—
All matchless limnings by a hand Divine.

There is a picture upon yonder slope,
So freshly verdant in the morning sun :
Two lambkins, types of Innocence and Hope,
O'er the bright carpet of the morning run.

How like two children in their careless play !
How heedless of the *butcher*, like the child !
I saw an old man looking, bowed and gray ;
He looked, seemed sorrowful, and faintly smiled.

The housewife watching from the cottage door,
Sees o'er the hive the insect cloud arise ;
Diffused awhile on humming wings they soar,
And kindly cluster where their monarch flies.

From underneath the bridge the phœbe starts,
Scared by the footsteps of the passer by ;
Through the cool arches of the alders darts,
Or snaps on salient wings the dronish fly.

With early morn the strains of music come,
And summer's minstrels gladden all the day ;
The gold-finch piping and the cuckoo's drum,
The bob'link's demi-semi-quavered lay.

There is the sun-browned farmer at his toil,
Early afield among the springing corn ;
His are the healthful labors of the soil,
The noblest calling of a freeman born.

True son of Independence ! ah, how few
High sounding statesmen can thy merit claim !
They may cause wars and fightings ; such as *you*
Save, in the battle's shock, the nation's name.

JULY.

ON the fourth morning of thy moon,
From slumber we awaken soon ;
The thundering gun, and pealing bell
A nation's glad remembrance tell.

'Tis well ; I love to see the fire
Our father's built, re-burn ;
I love the memories of the sire—
The ashes, and the urn !
I love to see the gray-haired man,
Who can tell more than history can,
Filled with emotion when he sees
That banner streaming in the breeze.
The tears that down his visage roll
When sounds that fire the soldier's soul
Break on his deadened ears, declare
He once was ready, and was *there*.

Haymakers to their labors speed
At morning's dewy dawn ;
They gather in the tangled mead
And on the upland lawn.

Through the tall grass the mower goes,
A day's work in his mein ;
The grass he likens to his foes,
His scythe to falchion keen.

(The farmer's life may peaceful be,
Free from all bloody feuds ;
Yet will he use instinctively
Warlike similitudes.)

High noon is blazing from the sky ;
Broad acres shorn and withered lie,
While in the maple's cooling shade
The mowers lazily are laid.

The farmer springs from out his chair,
The weather is his watchful care
And not the terrors of lee-shore
Could startle hardy seaman more,
Than him that growling from afar,
Proclaiming elemental war ;—
Sounds, which at distance far away,
I've heard my good old grandame say,
Seemed like the sullen booming gun
On battle-day at Bennington.

Sudden grows dark the western sky ;
All hands a-field ! is now the cry.
The cottage girl with laughing eyes
And flushed with health and exercise
Comes bounding outward from the door,
And half in sport, but something more,
Seizes a rake with carol cheery,
And with her presence fires the weary.
Then soon along the darkening road
Is trundling home the ponderous load,
Lively, my lads ! the rushing rain
Is just behind you on the plain !
Lively ! and gain the open doors,
E'er pattering on the roof it pours.

Toil brings its recompense to one
Whose thoughts are working like his hands ;
For toil's reward is not alone
The product rich of fertile lands.

Does one possess the painter's eye,
Or sip the bright Pierian bowl ?
Then cares that listless ease deny
Stamp vigor's impress on his soul.—

Thus muses, in the gloaming, one
As round him meadows shorn are seen,
And the last pencil of the sun
Tinges the oaks with golden green !

AUGUST—MY BIRTH-MONTH.

God of the years ! the month is born,
The month peculiarly my own,
When I, to lead life's hope forlorn,
All helpless on the world was thrown !

August, thou month of months to me !
Not for the beauty of thy scenes ;
Not harvests gladdening to see ;
But fast on thee my memory leans.

Not, as the poet sang, do I
‘ Dim backward ’ on thy memories look ;
Distinctly on the past they lie
Like pictures painted in a book.

I've seen the arrow fly by day ;
I've seen the pestilence walk by night ;
And once beneath thy scathing ray
Death hid a cherub from my sight.

Those torrid days and solemn eves,—
The cricket's dull and dreamy sound ;
The moonlight, shivered by the leaves,
All ghastly flickering on the ground !

Like as the soldier, who survives
The battle's rage and carnage sore,
Will wonder how it is he lives,
When thinking all its perils o'er ;—

E'en so do I look back and see
All the grim scenes thro' which I've pass'd,
And wonder how remains for me
The mortal conflict and the last.

Blent with the seasons is our life ;
E'en so it springs, e'en so departs ;
And tokens of a mortal strife
Are monthly graven on our hearts.

But there's another life to come ;
The thoughtful know and feel it sure ;
Where virtue shall attain its home,
And worth be honored that is pure.

A sort of harvest 't will appear,—
A mighty gathering of the grain ;
But many a sheaf called noble here,
Will not be counted so again.

Yes, the great Reaper, we are told
Shall be the judge of all the earth ;
Things by right names shall then be called :
Pride will be *pride*, and worth be *worth*.

SEPTEMBER.

THERE'S a note of sadness found
In the breeze ;
As it sweeps the dwelling round ;
And it goes with sighing sound
Through the trees.

Round the corner of the lone
Cottage wall
Comes a hollow, mystic moan,
And the hearer says the tone
' Sounds like Fall.'

And the evenings have a chill
Frosty gleam ;
White the mist at morning still
Climbing lazily the hill
From the stream.

Now bends the lowering sky
To the plain ;
Or damp the south winds fly,
And the rack goes drifting by,
Boding rain.

Now there's gladness in our ways
As we go ;
There's a pleasant smoky haze,
Such as Indian-summer days
Always show.

Plenty follows in the train
Of the plough ;
Lo ! the stooks of yellow grain
Dotting o'er the harvest plain ;
Lo ! the bough.

Fruits are ripening in the rays
Of the sun ;
And the 'lap of earth' displays
What in spring's engendering days
Was begun.

So September comes arrayed—
Plenteous dame !
But with all her cheer displayed,
There's a sombre little shade
On her name.

OCTOBER.

LIFT up your eyes, and look abroad
Upon this gorgeous scene ;
It is the last upon the road
Spring and the snows between ;

And though a beauteous vista may,
Through coming glooms, a moment play,
This shows as when a painter tries
A last grand effort ere he dies.

Let him who reads the falling leaf
His symbol of decay,
Blend with the plaintive winds his grief,
And mourn, as mourn he may.
And let him look with eye of faith
Beyond the brumal bourn of death,
And picture heaven blooming fair
And vernal freshness fadeless there.—

But I will mourn that thou art brief,
October in thy stay;
That thou art passing as the leaf
Drifts downward and away;
And for the clime of heaven fair,
Give me the Indian-summer there!
For never does it bless us here
But that I dream 't will there appear.

O, charming scenes! on looking back
To childhood's sunny ways,
The brightest spots upon life's track
Are these Autumnal days;
The breezy wood, the hazy sun,
The river-shore, and well-kept gun;
The dog that loved his master-boy,
And scoured the landscape, mad with joy.

The ramble on the frosty morn,
Nut-seeking, brisk and boon ;
The social husking of the corn,
The full, old-fashioned moon ;
The harvest-home beneath its beams,
The murmured music of the streams,
The mountain's prisms forest-wall,
The holy calm enwrapping all !

As hope, with her enchanting ray,
Intangible, yet bright,
Illumines childhood's flowery way
With undefined delight,—
So when the Pride of Autumn comes,
Its glorious gladness, and its glooms,
A pensive charm pervades my mind,
Complete and sweet, yet undefined.

NOVEMBER.

THE beauty of the fields is flown,
All withered their array ;
The brooks sing in an undertone,
The woods are grim and gray ;
O'er all of Nature's face is thrown
The semblance of decay.

The ditcher in the lonely mead
Arouses with surprise,
To hear from some frost-blackened weed

The pee-dee's startling cries ;
Sees solitary ravens speed
Along the windy skies.

Impending storms ; the frozen north
Is treasuring snow and hail ;
The south is threatening the earth
With rain and gusty gale ;
And Phœbus when he glimmers forth
Looks sickly, cold, and pale.

Foreshortened by the cloudy sky,
The day is quickly done ;
'T is twilight to the laborer's eye
Ere sets the tarnished sun ;
A hunter, idly halting nigh,
Gives him the ' evening gun.'

The cotter in the chimney-nook
Sits looking in the fire ;
There is a sadness in his look—
He hears a pensive lyre ;
The music is of nature's book,
And her autumnal choir.

The night-winds, roaring o'er the lea,
Begirt his dwelling round ;
Now shrill their melancholy key,
Now lowly and profound ;
The cotter hears, and pensively
He muses at the sound.

Anon he opes the door to spy
The aspect of the night ;
Dark clouds are driving 'thwart the sky,
And wild-fowl on their flight ;
He hears their undulating cry,
Faint from their distant height.

Borne inland from the misty deep
Now comes the loitering rain ;
The dreamer, waking from his sleep,
Listens, and dreams again
Of plunging barks, that, wrecking, sweep
The storm-enshrouded main.

DECEMBER.

COLD swept the withering blasts of fall
O'er herbage green, and sheltering tree ;
Thro' naked boughs the gleaning winds
Are howling mournfully.

Cold drives snow-muffling Boreas
Outside of comfort's well-barr'd door ;
Cold as thy presence is thy name,
December, to the poor.

Cold gleam the stars at night ; afar,
High in the north, the Dipper shines,
As if 'twere dripping with the wealth
Of Californian mines.

Ah! wanderer to the auric shore !
Sunk from thy sight yon cluster glows ;
So hope's bright phantom, chased by thee,
Round earth's rotunda goes.

A year's a type of human life ;
December truly symbols age ;
A year is like a volume read,
And *this* the final page.

A year is like a beaten road,
O'er which, as travellers, we wend
Our way amid its changeful scenes,
And *this* the journey's end.

A year is like a lengthened day ;
It has its dawn, its noon, its night ;
December is the sunset scene,
Pale glimmering on the sight.

A year is like a stream that flows
Thro' varied clime and scenery,
To find oblivion in the deep—
And *this* the opening sea.

A year is like the implement
The patriarch in vision found,
Spaced by twelve steps, in place of three—
And *this* the lowest round.

Reared 'gainst time's shadowy battlements
It leans, dissolving to the view ;
Ho ! climber, chiseling a name !
'T is gone, and yours, and you !

O, could one lift the solemn veil
That shrouds the mighty Past, and see
Departed years in centuries piled—
The coins of Deity ;

And could he see as in a glass
All the great family of man,
Those whose desires encompassed earth,
Now under Lethe's ban ;

Lost and unknown with all their deeds,
Lost and unknown with all their fame,—
Less would he strive to write upon
Time's flying scroll his name.

But rather this : that when the years
To him allotted, all are told,
He may on Heaven's ledger find
His credit good enrolled.

VISION OF POESY.*

How strangely real often seem
The wild chimeras of a dream !
One may in vision catch a gleam
Of glory bright,
That never blest, with faintest beam,
His wakeful sight.

Gone was a tiresome harvest day ;
The moon resumed her nightly sway,
And toil exhausted reapers lay
In slumber deep,
And I, bethinking how to pray,
Had drop'd asleep.

But mine that night was troubled sleep ;
In fancy still a-field to reap,
With all my skill I could not keep
My *gavels* true ;
As adverse, crinkling winds would sweep
My endless *through*.

* Revised from first edition. The rendition of an actual and remarkable dream of the author, occurring as narrated.

When lo ! a supernatural light
Flashed round my couch, surpassing bright,
While I, confounded at a sight
 So strangely dread,
Beneath the mantle in affright
 Concealed my head.

Bewildered with a sense of fear
That visitation dread was near,
I waited awful sounds to hear,
 Like dying groans,
Some spectral form might slow uprear
 Its chalky bones !

When wild, sweet music, soft and low,
To time harmonious gliding slow,
With soothing import seemed to flow,
 All fear to quell ;
Whereat, well pleased, quoth I, I'll know
 Who plays so well !

Unveiling then my wondering eyes,
I saw, entranced with deep surprise,
An angel-tenant of the skies,—
 It seemed to be—
Standing arrayed in beauteous guise,
 Beholding me.

The phantom seemed a maiden fair,
With long bright locks of auburn hair ;
Her arm and snowy bosom bare,
 Of sculptured mould ;

Her graceful robe !—no mortals wear
That airy fold !

Her eyes were lit with fancy's fire ;
One hand was clasped upon a lyre
The chords of which were golden wire,
Well worth the MUSE ;
Such as one deems the heavenly choir
Are wont to use.

The lyre she raised, and brushed a string
Softly as with a zephyr's wing ;
I heard the wire responsive ring
That mystic tone,
Which can the heart's most tender spring
Unlock alone.

Pensive she gazed upon my face,
And seemed thereon my thoughts to trace ;
Then with a noiseless, gliding pace
Approached the fair,
And thus she spoke with native grace,
And noble air :—

‘ Hail, Reaper, hail ! distrust not me,
Thy foster-mother, POESY !
I come with tidings unto thee,
Blest of the NINE !
I come to tell thee thou shalt be
Acknowledged mine !

‘ To Scotia's rustic bard I came
To crown his brow with bays of fame,

And hand posterity his name
 Recorded bright.
Haply of thee some bard the same
 One day may write.

‘To numbers I attuned his tongue ;
Prompted by me his lyre he strung
And to his raptured country sung
 His ditties wild ;
While fast to Nature’s robes he clung—
 Her loving child.

‘I know *thou* lovest Nature well,
Tho’ faithless all thy love to tell ;
With her ’t is thy delight to dwell,
 With her to stray
Down purling brook or lonely dell
 In musing way.

‘When Spring with all her winning powers
Invites thee forth within her bowers,
I see thee from her bright-eyed hours
 That skip along,
Her leafy sprays, and fragrant flowers
 Indite the song.

‘When Summer with her mantle green
In all her beauteous prime is seen,
I note thy soberness of mien,
 And thoughtful look ;
From her thou dost instruction glean
 As from a book.

‘ When sober Autumn’s moons appear,
I see thee mark the rolling year,
Its withered foliage scattering sere,
 With deep delight ;
Her voiceful winds you love to hear,
 Enraptured quite.

‘ When hoary Winter laps his shroud
O’er Nature’s face, thy muse is proud
To hear the bellowing demon crowd
 At midnight run ;
Or, see the drift, smothering cloud
 Pall the pale sun !

‘ When Fortune, with her fickle hand
Beckoned thee to a distant strand,
I saw thee list to her command
 And willing go ;
But bad’st farewell thy native land
 In dirge of wo.

‘ And when beneath a milder clime
Where folly takes “ no note of time,”
Where reveled riot boasts of crime—
 I’ve seen thee raise
Thy harp and strike a tuneful chime—
 New England’s praise.

‘ And when the voice of human woe
You hear, in trem’lous accents low,
I note the sympathetic flow
 That marks thy strains ;

You burn to see the gew-gaw show,
And worth in chains.

‘I see thee, scion of that race
Who dared Oppression’s might to face ;
You love their hallowed steps to trace
With ardor true ;
Inherent PATRIOTIC GRACE
Shall hallow you.

‘ This have I heard and seen in thee,—
Well pleased to hear, well pleased to see ;
This mantle, sacred unto me,
Shall thee enfold !
Amongst thy country’s bards shall be
Thy name enrolled !

‘ And take thou this, my sounding lyre !
And let it rouse thy soul to fire !
Strike from it strains that shall not tire,—
Sing from the *heart* ;
Thy country’s glory shall inspire
Your tuneful art.

‘ When on the hill-side or the plain
You guide the plough, or reap the grain,
Be free to wake the rural strain,
Your toils to cheer ;
For ever with you I’ll remain
To prompt and hear.

‘ Sing of thy ancient, noble state ;
Her worthy sons—renowned great ;

Her patriotic dead, whose fate
Your freedom gave ;—
Her PATRIOTIC FIRE innate
That burns to save !

‘ Sing of NEW ENGLAND, favored land !
Her customs dear—her social band ;
Her everlasting hills that stand
Above her meads,
As when at first, by HIS command,
They reared their heads !

‘ Sing of her streams, meandering slow,
Or rushing, seaward as they flow ;
Her beetling crags that backward throw
The climbing seas ;
Her blessed homes out-looking low
From sheltering trees.

‘ Tell of her sons that rove the earth
Far from the country of their birth ;
Tell of the bright domestic hearth—
Her daughters fair ;
The virtue, innocence and worth
Refulgent there.

‘ And now to this incline thine ear :—
In every place *true worth* revere ;
Respect thyself, nor censure fear
For thy poor lays ;
Let e’en Fame’s minions never hear
Thee fawn for praise.

‘ Envy not Mammon with his gold ;
My gifts can not be bought and sold.
Envy not Pride-of-place enrolled
 With pomp and power ;—
The Bard his title still shall hold
 As *Heaven’s dower !*”

Thus spoke the gracious, heaven-born maid.
I listened well,—no more afraid,
For all distrust and fear were laid
 Forgotten by ;
And took the lyre, e’en as she bade,
 My skill to try.

Then, as her mantle o’er me fell,
Enchantment wrapt me in its spell.
How sweetly did my numbers swell
 And glide along !
O, for the gift once more to tell
 That rapturous song !

I ceased to sing, with lyre upraised,
At my unwonted skill amazed,
Waiting expectant to be praised ;—
 Could *she* be there ?
I turned to look, but sorrowing gazed
 On empty air !

For Phœbus from his ocean-bed
Aloft his morning signals spread ;
Pale in the dawn my vision fled
 Like wreathing smoke ;
And I to song of birds, instead
 Of mine, awoke.

AN AUTUMNAL LEAF.

WHEN withered leaves around my way
Drift in the fresh autumnal blast,
I view them, as they rustling play,
As Summer's phantoms flitting past.
In some still nook, or sheltering lee
Of roaring woods, they seem to me
When resting from their eddying flight,
To build departed Summer's urn ;
Where Phœbus pours a saddened light
Like moonlight fanned to burn.

The rivulet lowers its babbling voice,
Past its brown banks runs dreamily ;
It seems to take, as if from choice,
The melancholy minor key.
All nature's full of sympathy :
The winds and waters, woods and plains,
Together blend their dirge-like strains ;
The lonely bird forbears to sing ;
Grief-stifled seems each tuneful throat ;
E'en darker grows the raven's wing,
And desert-like his note.

The herd-boy, keeping watch a-field
Beside the late outstanding grain,
Marks leaves in gusty circles wheeled
And scattered o'er the russet plain ;
Or sees the wavy line that floats
In the gray rack to flute-like notes ;
Wild fowl are harrowing the sky,
The early harbingers of snow ;
Far southward on his straining eye
All indistinct they grow.

The dying winds, as sets the sun,
Usher the gloaming and expire ;
The frosty stars gleam, one by one,
Like ice reflecting distant fire.
The moon awaits her time to rise
To bathe with her cold light the skies ;
The frost king creeps in stillness forth ;
While shooting upward high and higher,
The nameless wizzard of the north
Kindles his ghostly fire.

The peasant homeward hieing now,
Belated, turns his thoughtful gaze,
And sees on high the starry ' Plough'
Pale through the evanescent blaze.
Thoughts, sad yet pleasing, crowd his mind ;
Thoughts formless half, and half defined,
Such as the bard and painter feel,
But fail to picture or to sing ;
Thoughts that of genius fix the seal
And point her upward wing !

The hunter, camped beside the spring,
Where the red maple sheltering stands,
As low the welling waters sing,
And cheerful shine his blazing brands,
Moodily muses as his eye
Watches the flashing northern sky,
And dreams in ODIN'S distant hall
Hunters some kingly banquet share,
And he, one day, when Death shall call,
Shall mingle with them there.

When withered leaves around my way
Drift in the fresh autumnal blast,
I look upon them as they play,
As Summer's phantoms flitting past.
In stilly nook, or sheltering lee
Of waving woods, they seem to me,
When gathering from their eddying flight,
To build departed Summer's urn,
Where Phoebus pours a mellowed light
Like moonlight fanned to burn.

TO A WILD ROSE.

SWEET offspring of the solitude !
Dost in this lonely spot elude
The wanton gaze and notice rude
Of vulgar eyes ?
Hear me, if I on thee intrude,
Apologize !

No rival, tender-hearted *fair*,
Made thy young growth her willing care,
Nor hid thee when the frosty air
Spread winter wide ;
Or marks thee blooming rich and rare
In flowery pride.

Deep in the woodland, wild to view,
Flora, lone-straying, planted you ;
Mild Vesper wet with gentle dew,
The teeming earth,
And Phœbus peeped the foliage through
To hail thy birth.

Near thee, in ever watchful mood,
The partridge trains her little brood ;
And pussy comes o'er many a rood,
 With dewy feet,
To mingle with her morning food
 Thy fragrance sweet.

Sweet little rose ! thou mindest me
Of innocence and modesty ;
Apart the world, and lone, like thee,
 They, too, are raised
Beneath some cottage-sheltering tree,
 Unknown, unpraised.

Emblem of *worth*—(alas, how true !)
That in retirement, veiled from view,
Gives to its poor unnoticed few,
 A conscience clean ;
Then in the spot whereon it grew,
 It dies unseen !

LINES ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE CLARA.*

It was in the summer time,
And the leaves were in their prime
 And their pride ;
It was early in the morn,
And a robin sang forlorn
 When she died.

You have seen a budding flower
In some sweet, domestic bower—
 Fair to see ;
You have seen a lily white,
Pure, and beauteous, and bright ;
 Such was she !

You have seen that cherished flower
In some sad untimely hour
 Leave its tree ;
You have seen the lily lost
Even when you prized it most ;
 So was she !

You can see, on looking back
O'er life's memorable track,
 With a sigh,

* *Gill, Mass.*—Died, CLARA, daughter of Josiah D. and Josephine M. P. Canning, 1½ years.

Scenes so sweet they even seem
Like the fiction of a dream ;
So can I !

As is written in the Word,
' When the candle of the Lord'
O'er you shone ;
You renew the past awhile,
As you ponder you would smile ;
But you groan.

For, perhaps, a little child
In its innocence has smiled
On your knee ;
Or has hailed you from the door,
When the toils of day were o'er,
With its glee.

Now in vain those little feet
You may watch to hear, and meet,
As you come
With a slow and sober tread,
For your thoughts are on the dead,
And their home.

And, perhaps, on looking back
O'er life's melancholy track,
With a sigh,
You can tell the sons of mirth
You are getting weaned from earth ;
So can I !

MY BROTHER'S OCEAN-GRAVE.

I WENT to view a brother's grave ;
Not where the weeping willows wave
 Their pendent branches green ;
Not where the spire, with sunward slope,
Points steadfast to the realms of Hope
 Above a quiet scene !

Not where the monumental stone
Or chiseled statue stands a lone
 Cold sentry o'er the dead ;
Not where Affection plants with care
Exotics rich and flowers rare
 To dress the sleeper's bed.

Not where the sunlight on the sod
Gilds, like the blessed smile of God,
 The couch of mortal rest ;
Where songs of birds and zephyrs fair
Foreshadow to the mourner there
 The regions of the blest.

Oh, no ! I went to view again
The gray and melancholy main,
 And rode the storm-rolled wave ;

I mused upon the waters wild,
Befitting tomb for Ocean's child ;—
 There was my brother's grave !

GOD, in HIS providence, appears
At times to spurn Affection's tears
 And ineffective prayers ;
At times 't would seem as if the just
HE crushed by sorrows to the dust,
 And ' bands' in death were theirs.

Such my distracting thoughts, when first,
Years since, the tidings o'er me burst
 Like thunder from the cloud ;
News of a brother's mortal sleep,
His corse ' COMMITTED TO THE DEEP,'
 Lashed in his hammock-shroud !

But now I love the restless sea ;
Oh, what a mighty grave has he
 Within its bosom vast !
Its voiceful billows, as they roll,
Wake solemn music in my soul,
 Responsive to the past.

Buried of Ocean ! though my eye
Saw not where thy cold ashes lie,
 Not *that* do I deplore ;
In death thou'rt blest ; thy grave, the sea,
Is nobler far than mine will be
 Upon the tamer shore !

LINES TO A BULLET FROM THE FIELD OF
WATERLOO.*

BULLET from the famous fray,
Waterloo!

Long ago, and far away,—
Bloody Waterloo!

Looking on thy battered form,
Fancy paints the sulphur storm;
Paints the red sod reeking warm;
Paints dread Waterloo!

Ball from the mighty battle, say,
Was thy flight harmless on that day?
A gunner's practised eye can see
Scarce harmless could thy mission be;
Cain's murderous marks on thee impress'd,
Puts sceptic doubt at once to rest.

Hadst thou a tongue, then such a tale
As wets the cheek of Pity, pale,
Thou mightst reveal, thyself to show
The witless cause of weighty woe.

* A *genuine* relic; presented to the author by JUNIUS D. ADAMS,
Esq., Stockbridge, Berkshire.

In some sweet, rural spot, perchance
A vineyard green of sunny France,
Some love-lorn maiden long bemourned
Thy conscript victim unreturned ;
Wandered the purpling alleys o'er
Lamenting him she saw no more.
And he, prone on the trampled soil,
Amidst the raging fight's turmoil,
Wept with affection's feeling true
As he recalled her last adieu,
The scenes, the hopes of youthful prime,
Fast fading with the ebb of time.

Perchance on haughty Albion's shore
Some titled mourners did deplore
In all the pageantry of woe,
One whom thy fatal flight laid low ;
One who found death in seeking fame—
The bubble of a sounding name.

Perhaps in heathered Scottish dell
Was heard the pibroch's wailing swell
Filling the clannish haunts with grief
For ' bonnie lad' or ' Hieland chief,'
Whose tartan was his shrouding, too,
Beneath the turf of Waterloo.

Perhaps one bowed by many years
Went grieving down the ' vale of tears,'
Of whose declining days the stay
Thou didst in battle strike away,

And left embittered, hopeless age
 To mourn Ambition's jealous rage.

O, fell Ambition ! thou hast sown
 Discordant seeds, and warrings grown ;
 Plucked up the peaceful olives where
 They grew, and set hell's bale-fires there.
 O, fell Ambition,—heartless fiend !
 What horrid harvests thou hast gleaned !
 The battle field thy threshing floor ;
 Thy garner stained with human gore !

Wert thou a relic, blood ensealed,
 From SARATOGA's storied field ;
 From MONMOUTH's plain, or BUNKER's height—
 Spots dear to FREEDOM and the RIGHT,—
 Then wouldst thou seem another thing ;
 Then nobler numbers might I sing ;
 Then this I write, to him who read,
 Might not be leaden Lines on Lead ;
 But both my musings and my theme
 Seem bright as Californian dream.
 Then on my horn-hard palm I'd take
 Thee, for my soldier grandsire's sake,
 And see a halo round thee shine
 To warm my heart and gild my line ;
 For in thy battered form I'd see
 The daysman of my liberty ;
 And show thee up to tyrants, for
 Remembrancer and monitor.

But when ambitious man sits down
And counts his chances for a crown,
And reckons up with idle pen
The hecatombs of fellow men
That he must marshal out to die
To throne him regally and high ;
When tyrant power sends forth its slaves
To murderous fight and bloody graves,—
No freeborn bard may wake the strain
Heroic, o'er th' ensanguined plain,
Or kindle at a thing like you,
Ball from the field of Waterloo !

THE FARMER TO HIS PLOUGH.

Not homely is the theme I sing,
Tho' fancy seldom plumes her wing
Beside thy glittering share ;
She'll wander, first, earth's confines o'er,
And search, and draw from fab'lous lore,
Her burden and her care.

Not homely is the theme I sing,
Though some account thee but a thing
Devoid of every grace ;
I know not who invented thee ;
Whoe'er he was, he ought to be
The glory of our race.

The sailor on his anchor leans,
The soldier dotes on battle-scenes,
And shows his gleaming brand ;
But forward comes the farmer now,
With honest front, the good old plough
Beneath his horny hand !

The throne, the sceptre, and the crown
May into ruins crumble down ;
Still man in peace may rest ;
Wealth may take wings and fly away,
The luxuries of pride decay,
Still man be truly blest :—

But banish thee from off the earth !
Then wailing takes the place of mirth
And direful woe upsprings ;
Then Desolation blights the land,
And Famine, with her bony hand,
Defies the wants of kings.

Back through the hoary old I look
To find the plough and reaping-hook :
I find them there, and view
Old rapt Elisha at the plough,
And Cincinnatus' thoughtful brow
All damp with labor's dew.

Though I may never hope to drive
The team Elisha drove,* or thrive
With Cincinnatus' fame ;
Yet fast by thee, old plough ! I'll stand,
And let my thoughts run more ' to land,'
Than on a mighty name.

* See 1st Kings ; xix chap. 19 verse.

THE HARVEST MOON.

I.

THE burning sun has gone to rest ;
All cloudless are the skies ;
The breeze blows softly from the west ;
Night's dreamy strains arise.
Forgotten now the toil, the heat
That marked the glittering noon,
As o'er the eastern hills I greet
The reaper's yellow moon.

II.

Aloft she cleaves the ether thin
And 'beautifully blue,'
As if impatient to begin
The evening and the dew ;
As if in mirthful mood she chased
Old Phoebus to his rest,
And spied him rounding in his haste
The corner of the west.

III.

What placid beauty, what repose
Makes lovely now the night,
As o'er the landscape Luna throws
Her mollifying light !
The mountain, steep and rough by day,
Seems now a smoother hill ;
So softening influence may allay
Man's rude, imperious will.

IV.

The reaper sees each well known field
Assume some fairy change ;
And forms fantastic seem revealed
Where swaying shadows range.
The rustic bridge that spans the stream
Seems now a gem of art,
So sweetly does the nightly beam
Perform the pencil's part.

V.

Fit season for ideal dream !
While plodding mortals sleep,
I'll wander by the lonely stream
And musing vigils keep.
The glancing ripple, and the still
Deep water's shady flow,
Remind me of a hasty will,
And cautious prudence slow.

VI.

The zephyrs wandering thro' the vale,
 As if without an aim,
 Shall fan the spark of fancy pale
 To vivifying flame.
 And thou, bright beamer, far o'erhead,
 Composing toil and strife !
 Thou dost in bands of beauty wed
 The reaper to his life.

LINES TO A BEE.

THOU'RT weary, busy little thing !
 Thy load is large, and small thy wing ;
 And then to give that *Highland fling*
 As you alighted !
 No wonder you displayed your sting
 Before you righted.

All things have failings, so we see ;
 E'en thou who art, as all agree,
 The very soul of industry,
 And else of merit,
 Art tempered like the very De——,
 Nay, *Evil Spirit*.

When morning opes her brightening eye,
Thou scan'st the aspect of the sky,
And if no murky storm be nigh
Or tempest hover,
Your tiny wings are spread to fly
To fields of clover.

There, busy through the live long day,
You cull your sweets and bear away ;
And though for miles abroad you stray,
Ne'er lost in straying ;
Thou art for straightness in survey
A common saying.

From bees man may a lesson draw
In order, government, and law ;
No law he ever framed that saw,
Of time, the tithe
Of that which back to chaos raw
Has marked the hive.

No change your government has made
Since bees at first their taste displayed,
Nor shall new laws derange your trade,
Ye sweet distillers !
Till earth and bees at rest are laid
By fire or *Millers*.

Fixed in one course, you firm abide ;
And, though all patriotic pride,

You never boast you've bled and *died*
 To save your nation ;
 Then come to life and long preside
 In some fat station ;

But let a foe invade your ground,
 And hark ! how fierce the warriors sound !
 No lack of practice either's found—
 All seek the fight ;
 And he who'd face the vollied round
 You'll put to flight.

E'en Samson, whose strong arm refused
 No giant deed, upon you mused ;*
 But still I'm thinking he abused
 You grossly, sonny ;
 Some foul chicanery he used
 To get your honey.

O, could old Sloth thy habits know !
 Could Uncle Sam thy wisdom show,
 How round his public purse would grow !
 How deep his pocket !
 How would his *Loco-motive* go
 Ahead, like Crocket !

* Judges, chapter xiv.

THE THRESHER AND THE RAT.

'T WAS when the bridge the frost had made,
Had robbed the *Charon* of his trade ;
When slipping sleighs and jingling bells
Supplied the place of rattling wheels ;—
When side-long looked the southing sun,
And labor out-of-door was done,
A farmer to his barn did go
To thresh, as he was wont to do.

He was as strong a man as ever
Beneath the bowlders thrust a lever ;
As brave a man as aught of those
Who faced on Bunker-Hill their foes ;
As honest as the man who sweat
For forty years to pay a debt ;
A patriot, and no truer one
TECUMSEH was, or WASHINGTON ;—
He was, to make description short,
A yankee of the goodly sort.

The wheaten sheaves he spread and pounded ;
The echoes to his flail resounded ;

The ox looked wise at what he saw,
And tasted daintily the straw ;
The fowls came craking round the door
For seeds that flew beyond the floor ;
And loudly in the thresher's ear
Sang old time-keeping Chanticleer.
But moodily the thresher wrought,
And thinking, (for he must have thought,)
While he the bearded grain was threshing,
Of men who needed such a dressing.

The seventh shock he'd just begun—
(He chalked the number, one by one,)—
But scarce had he a dozen thumped,
When forth a rat, confounded, jumped !

THRESHER.

Stop thief ! here, Jowler, come and shake him !
Here, pussy, pussy ! quick, and take him !
These blasted rats have torn my sheaves,
Like old ' Aunt Lizzy's ' bible leaves.
No candidate, in search of *Sunday*,
E'er owned a horse one-half so hungry.

His words with speech inspired the rat ;
He turned, and on his haunches sat :

RAT.

I pray thee, goodman, stop thy grieving
That I, poor body, get a living ;

And, rather pity, when I tell ye
You 've pounded me almost to jelly.

THRESHER.

High words, indeed, for rats to speak !
I thought at most they could but squeak.
You must be leader of the throng
That 's troubled me so much and long.
By night I hear you, on my bed,
Chase one another overhead,
And rattle up and down the wall
Some plunder to your dens to haul ;
And in my barns the live-long day,
You waste my precious grain away.

RAT.

You 've little charity, I see,
For such a needy wretch as me.
I taste your grain a little, true ;
'Tis quite as good for me as you ;
And it 's the fashion now-days, neighbor,
To get a living without labor.

THRESHER.

You have more brass, conceited knave,
In your old phiz, than thieves should have ;
Think you I 'll harvest corn and wheat
For miserable rats to eat ?
Look at the ant, that toils and strives,
And on her own exertion lives ;

Look at the bees, wee, busy things,
That make a food that 's fit for kings ;
Look at your cousin in the bushes,
He is content with grass and rushes ;
The prowling fox, that now and then
Comes to my yard and steals a hen,
Would say you were of rogues the chief ;
The skunk would spurn you for a thief.

RAT.

Look here ! if preaching is your object,
I 'll show you more important subject :
Now did it never strike your mind
That there are rats among mankind ?
The rat of human-kind, you see,
In form is different from me ;
He stands six feet, or less, or more ;
Walks on two feet, instead of four ;
Wears a fine coat with pendent tail,
With *pockets* in it,—where I fail ;
Has hands whose single grasp can seize
More than my twelve-month's bread and cheese ;
And, to crown all, his Maker kind
Gives him a shrewd, discerning mind,
All his base life, on earth to find
Bye-paths through which to seek his leaven,
And dream of rat-holes, too, in heaven.
Now, sir, your eyes are oped, I wis ;
' Look on this picture, and on *this* ;'
And, on the whole, you must opine
His breed is worse, by far, than mine.

THRESHER.

All true, old rat ! thou speakest sense !
Fill once thy maw, and get thee hence ;
For since thy wit has cooled my choler,
I would not harm thee for a dollar.

RAT.

Nay, goodman, hear me till I've done,
Then, if you're willing, I will run.
Some human rats, of whom I speak,
The garner of your nation seek ;
They talk about the public good,
As those who gull the public should ;
Line well their nests with ' Biddle's rags,'
Filch from the people's money-bags,
And then, to hide the thefts they've made,
With law and logic make parade ;
Call a sham court ; put in the chair
Some ancient rat of presence rare,
Whose views of justice and intention
Are past all common comprehension ;
Whose verdicts, ninety in a hundred,
Are to the public never rendered.
Or some old rat, benignly feeling,
To give the rest more chance for stealing,
Slips quietly among some cargo
That puts to sea without embargo,
And on a foreign shore arrives,
With spoils to last him while he lives.

In short, they live so free and easy,
That thoughts of envy often tease me ;
For when, like me, in theft detected,
They sneak aside, and live respected.

I would proceed, and tell you more,
How at the sanctuary door
These precious rats sometimes go in
With pious horror, feigned, for sin,
And there for hapless sinners groan,
Whom they've dissected to the bone.

I could dilate for full an hour,
To tell you how they get at power ;
How scrambling o'er the backs of fools,
They use the willing dupes for tools,
And dig their way through virtuous worth,
And trample genius in the earth,
Till puffed with spoils, and damned with fame,
True *rats* in everything but name.

I'd tell you all ; but this must do,
For I perceive I'm hindering you ;
But when at night you hear us run,
Think of the gang at Washington ;
And rack your powers of invention
For traps to hold them in detention ;
And when for us you'd call the cat,
Call *Sootie* for the human rat.

The rat, no more with speech inspired,
Now turned, and *suddenly* retired.

TO A RED SQUIRREL,
BARKING AT ME WHILE PASSING THROUGH A WOOD.

Good conscience ! what can be the matter,
To call forth such an awful clatter !
Dost think that I am come to scatter
Salt on thy tail ?
About thy head and ears to patter
The leaden hail ?

You don't insinuate, I hope,
I'm some defaulter on the *slope* ?
Or some poor brain-bewildered mope
Whom you can hector ?
One thing is sure,—there's no 'soft soap'
About your lecture.

Just stop awhile your saucy din,
And think about the heinous sin
Of judging people, kith nor kin,
Before you know them ;
If thoughts are in your squirrel skin,
Then you may show them.

How many, blest with reason's light,
Have passed wrong judgment at first sight,

And poured unwittingly their spite
Where least deserved,
And fawned on those who from the right
Have basely swerved !

With lies, poor Kit, I will not cheat thee ;
The time has been when thus to meet me
Were to meet death : but now I'll treat thee
Just as one should,
That oft hereafter I may greet thee
Here in the wood.

You seem to feel quite safe ;—you are ;
I would not harm of thee a hair ;
But I 've a word or two to spare
By way of stricture ;
Of *impudence* thou art a rare
And striking picture !

Take my advice ; don't imitate
The human race at such a rate !
Your consequence may e'en be great,
Though one must doubt it ;
For man, like thee, may storm and prate,
Yet be without it.

Could he who speaks for *Bunkum* stand
And hear thee rate and reprimand !
His frothy speeches sagely planned,
You 'd plainly show him ;
He fills with nonsense all the land,—
You fill my poem.

THE TROUT UPON THE SHALLOWS.

ONE morn I strayed the brook beside,
Where leafless stood the willows,
And looking in the stream I spied
A trout upon the shallows.

It writhed, it struggled, and it turned ;
In vain its fins were flying ;
The kindling sun in heaven burned—
The hapless fish was dying.

So musingly I passed along,
With feelings touched with pity ;
And pity lastly moved a song,
And moral marked the ditty :

When man on pleasure's stream sets sail,
And fortune blows her bellows,
How soon the fickle stream may fail
And leave him on the shallows !

When riches leave their owners here,
And vanish like the swallows,
How many buy the knowledge dear
That wealth is full of shallows !

When politicians prate and preach,
And office-taking follows,
Too late ' the people' see their speech
Was babbled over shallows.

When zeal expires that used to burn,
And hearts grow cold and callous,
How often are we pained to learn
Religion has its shallows !

Then some with bards and wits would vie ;—
Poor, thoughtless, brainless fellows ;
How oft before their ink is dry
They 're fast upon the shallows !

And, reader, hast thou seen a man
Expire upon the gallows ?
'T was just, perhaps, but justice can
And justice does have shallows.

What hideous vice concealed from view,
In wealth and honor wallows,
Which, giving justice half its due,
Would wriggle on the shallows !

POTATOES.

READER, when thro' the country going
You 've, doubtless, seen potatoes growing.
And when the frosts of autumn cold
Have nipp'd the grass and bound the mould,
Stripp'd trees like spars bereft of rigging,—
Doubtless you 've seen potatoe-digging.

O ! ye, who drive some useful trade,
Yet long the farmer's life to lead,
Because in some wee patch of ground,
Hemm'd in by walls and buildings round,
You make it pastime with the hoe
To spend an odd half hour, or so,
And boast your skill to raise tomatoes,—
Turn out one day and dig potatoes !
Wind, dead north pole ! and you may hear
Cool Boreas purring in your ear ;
Divided, your opinion lingers
'Twixt itching nose and dirty fingers
As from the fountain of your brain
The sap drips like the sugar rain ;

And when in order to reflect
Should you your aching spine erect,
Then envy not the crow that flies
Bowling along the windy skies,
Or, tacking in the current, scuds
To the lee side of sheltering woods ;
But still if farmer's life you covet,
Think ' what is truth,' and say you love it.

POTATOES ! who would ever dream
Of winning bays with such a theme !
'T were vain to try, I'd surely think it,
Unless with something one could link it,—
Something that should throughout the whole
Pervade the body with a soul.
So briefly then to join, I'll try,
Potatoes and humanity.

Potatoes ! true the theme is homely,
But there are others far less comely ;
Nor do I care how critics thwack me
Since Paul himself will kindly back me.*

First, note this sober looking fellow,
His color of a dingy yellow ;
Rough his exterior, you see,
But, for all that, give him to me.
Nature has booked him ' No. One ;'
A little cooking and he's done.

* 1st Cor. 15th, 47th, first clause.

The staff of life is wrap'd within
This honest old potatoe's skin,
And wheresoever you may meet him
You 'll love him well enough to eat him.

Now, reader, have you never seen
An awkward, country lad, and green,
Raised like this root, we have in hand,
In some lone spot on mountain land,
Or by some brook, whose brawlings never
Have magnified it to a river?—
Yes, you have seen, if you were looking,
This raw one go abroad for *cooking*.
His innate worth becoming known,
Transformed somewhat you 've seen him grown ;
The outer man brushed up a little,
But furbished bright the native mettle ;
His story told, his praises sung,
Himself the theme of every tongue ;
In halls of lore and halls of state
He 's fed the learned and the great ;
At every board a welcome guest,—
And when he 's gone, like all the rest,
How often is he brought to mind,
A very jewel of his kind !

Well, to proceed :—here is another,
But totally unlike his brother.
Despite his size and aspect good,
This one is scarcely fit for food.
Great tales were told about his birth
Far o'er the sea in foreign earth :

A farmer prince, somewhere, 't was said,
Some sage experiments had made
Upon the root of which I sing,
And at the last produced this thing ;
And, thereupon, to give it fame,
Baptized it with his princely name.
The story took ; the roots were sold ;
E'en Yankee farmers, shrewd and old,
Astonished at their wondrous yield,
Set *Rohans* growing in their field.

Dear reader, when you chance to see
A boaster of his pedigree,
Thinking for grandeur's lord to pass,
When you can see he's but an ass ;
Whene'er you see a preference given
O'er native yeast to foreign leaven ;
Whene'er a humbug buzzes round
And fain would light upon your ground,
Hit it with *Rohans* on the sconce,
And that will settle it at once.

Last, see these little dirty pellets,
Scarcely the size of musket bullets.
In vain to say that weeds o'ertopp'd them,
Or summer's drouth from growing stopp'd them,
Or, were they tended with more care,
They might have been potatoes rare.—
Such logic's vain ; there ever will
Be small potatoes in the hill.

Reader, again, whene'er you find
Men of great words and little mind,
Whose dim ideas chime and jingle
Like small potatoes on a shingle ;
Whene'er you see a lazy fellow,
Not wholly soft, but partly mellow,
Who for a time foregoes his ration
Yet boasts his grog-shop graduation ;
Recounts his drunken frolics rare,
And thinks that sober people are
For these, and for reform, his debtors,
And he a Cicero in letters ;—
Whene'er you see a *Miller* wise
Who grinds out scripture prophecies,
And sifts out, as he would the bran,
What mortal never could, nor can ;—
When you see saints, self-named, self-holy,
Expecting to ascend to glory,
When tenfold easier would soar
Your bardship in a cart and four ;—
Whene'er you see an office-seeker
Acting the part of public teacher,
Condemning in rhetoric treasures
The other party's ways and measures ;
Showing such evils were because
You did not let *him* make the laws ;—
Whene'er you see a zealot wise
Mangling GOD's word before your eyes ;
One who mistook an owlet's screech
For call from Zion's Head to preach ;—

Fair-weather sailors when you spy ;
Brave fellows if no storm be nigh,
When e'en make mention of a gale,
And, lo ! the tars have lowered sail ;—
Blank-cartridge soldiers, none the bolder
For the bright gun upon their shoulder ;
And generals full of martial bluster
To face the awful scenes of—*muster* ;—
Whenever, I again repeat,
With all this sort of thing you meet,
The fittest emblem you may find
Potatoes of the smallest kind.

TO AN OLD PAIR OF BREECHES.

ADIEU! past all redemption torn!
The brunt of service you have borne
Bravely and long, and well have worn
Your seams and stitches;
But now your latter end I mourn,
My veteran breeches.

I call to mind when thou wert new,
Your nap was smooth, and bright your hue
Of colors best,—the steadfast blue;
With secret fears
I take the retrospective view;
And all appears!

I cannot wear you more; O, no!
I may not such exposure show
As long-eared beast, long time ago,
In lion's skin;
That skin was rent, we know, and, lo!
The ass within.

'T is hard to cast you by,—'t is sad ;
A better pair was never had
Than were you when at first you clad
Your lord and master ;
But then your present case is bad,—
O, dire disaster !

Yes, made to wear, and not to sell,
You kept together long and well ;
And when, at last, you failed—O ! tell,
Were you misused ?
I stood astonished for ' a spell,'
And back-ward mused.

Your comely front your owner's care
Preserved in aspect good and fair ;
The tooth of time 't would even dare
Another year ;
When fiercely fell old Wear-and-tear
Upon the rear.

But never mind ; all things must fail,
Both mind and matter, head and tail ;
And since your case is past all bail
By ' sharps' and shears,
'T is useless longer to bewail
Your rent arrears.

TO MY OLD DOG.*

“ HE was a gash an’ faithfu’ tyke
As ever lap a sheugh or dyke ;
His breest was white, his towsie back
Weel clad wi’ coat o’ glossy black ;
His gaucie tail wi’ upward curl
Hung o’er his hurdies wi’ a swirl.”

The Twa Dogs.

SOME venal bards indite the lay
To such themes only as will *pay* ;
Some, fawning round a patron, play
Self-praising airs ;—
Since ‘ every dog must have his day,’
These must have theirs.

* “ In looking over my MSS., this rainy day, I encountered the following poem, written years ago,—one of my earliest productions, and never published. ‘ Love me, love my dog,’ says the old adage. It may be that the subject-matter of the verse will suit the case of some of your country-boy readers ; or of some brother farmer, who, like myself, delights occasionally in looking back upon ‘ dog and gun’ days.”—*The Author to the Editor of the New England Farmer*, Nov. 15, 1851.

For me, friend of my boyhood's days,
Grown gray in following my ways,
Though surely not a theme for lays
 Of lofty chime,
I'll give thee all the hearty praise
 Of *dog*-rel rhyme.

Though old, decrepit, deaf and blind,
I can look back and call to mind
The days when one might search and find,
 The county through,
No dog more trusty, true and kind,
 Old BEAU, than you!

Few dogs your aptness have outdone ;
You knew all tackle of the gun ;
Ball, pouch, or horn shown you, each one
 A whine exacted ;
The gun itself would make you run
 Almost distracted.

When hunting, if no luck had we,
Though famous your veracity,
I've known you feign some game to 'tree,'
 And coolly bark,
When fancy even could not see
 Aught for a mark.

Whene'er with rod and line and hook
I strayed a-fishing down the brook,

You crept behind with knowing look,
And watched the line ;
And when the spangled trout I took,
My joy was thine.

When furry game my notice drew,
Low by the bank where alders grew
I set the trap wherever you
Appeared most willing,
And in the morning well I knew
I 'd make a shilling.

And when the corn we gathered in,
Turning the stooks with rustling din,
The rat, o'ertaken in his sin,
Paid dear for stealing ;
One shake, and he with ragged skin,
Was past all feeling.

Your strength and courage balanced well,
Though sometimes you would whine and yell
When 'mongst bad company you fell,
Like honest Tray,—
Till I 'maun interfere mysel',
As Burns would say.

For your repute I 've been afraid
When you some prank of folly play'd,
Or when, by way of serenade,
In dog-day weather,
The distant moon you 've idly bayed,
For hours together.

Some few of all your tricks were vile,
But these showed frankness without guile ;
And yet with modesty meanwhile

 You ne'er was gifted ;
E'en Sundays, in the church broad-isle,
 The leg you've lifted.

With other dogs you'd hold a caucus,
And snuff and growl and raise a fracas,
Till kicked by him who acted *Janus*

 From out the meeting ;
For sore with laughter it did shake us
 To see your greeting.

Your share of ills you've had to bide ;
You wear a bullet in your side,
And many scars that seam your hide

 Your conflicts tell ;
Some sort of colic once you tried
 Sorely, but well.

You've something like the asthma, too ;
But few more ills will trouble you ;
With life you've gotten nearly through,

 Its joy and pain ;
Of all your puppy brethren few
 Or none remain.

But never shall I want a friend
As long as you can snuff the wind ;

And when your honest life shall end,
My ancient brave,
Yonder, where purple poke-weeds bend,
Shall be your grave.

And when, from hunting, passing by
Your resting-place, I 'll linger nigh ;
The thundering volley where you lie
Shall tell your spirit
That still your master has an eye
To all your merit.

A "MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM."

TOLD FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SCALY HEARER.

'T WAS nightfall on a summer's day
When *Sirius* holds a baneful sway ;
When thunder-gusts full frequent fly
And wrathful thro' the sultry sky ;
When sudden showers of roaring rain
Dash drenching o'er the stubble plain ;
Or sheeting mists forbear to dry
The stooks of weather-blackened rye ;
And Phœbus seems to loose his power
To shine unclouded for an hour ;
When farmers, vexed with ' horrors ' never,
Will gloomy visions have, if ever,—
The scene occurred which I disclose.
Believe or not, just as you choose.

Intent the silver-eel to take,
I hied me to a neighboring lake.
An old tree root, the winds had felled,
My form in careless posture held ;
And smothered in a tempting show,
I cast the baited hook below.

The dripping moon,* night's ancient daughter,
Just looked upon the sleeping water
Thro' rifted clouds, then like a ghost
Fled, in the closing blackness lost.

There long I sat, unthinking quite,
And heard the 'voices of the night :'
Sounds which might puzzle one to tell
Who made them all, this side of hell ;
Musquetoos, whose delightful buzz
Might e'en provoke the man of *Uz* ;
Bull-frogs, grum base and barytone,
The drowsy pur-r, and doleful groan ;
While from the top of neighboring tree
An owlet whined a symphony—
Such sounds, too, as, I am thinking,
Set your fisherman to *winking*,
For music, tho' it opes the ears,
Oft shuts the eyes of him who hears.

All on a sudden, as we say,
Just along shore a little way,
Reclined upon the sloping bank,
Appeared a figure, long and lank.
He held a rod of extra length,
Made less for beauty than for strength ;

* A sign of rainy weather in New England, derived from the ancient Indian tribes, is the appearance of the new moon, viz : when its horns are blunt, and its shape is such (to use the Indian expression) that it will not "hold water."

It had a gallows look about it ;
(You should have seen it if you doubt it.)
His line was such another cord
As he used who betrayed his Lord,
And such as hangmen now-days use
To knot the ignominious noose.
His hook, e'en in the gloom of night,
Shone with peculiar auric light ;
No hollow tinsel of the tinner,
But SOLID GOLD, as I'm a sinner !
For baits he used as many kinds
As were his fish of different minds ;
(Not that small fry have *minds*, but then
What may he use who *catches men* ?)
Beside him stood a basket large
And black as hold of charcoal barge,
And thro' its sooty meshes steamed
Sulphureous fumes that lurid gleamed !

O, for a sheet of heavy fold,
As strong as trunk of oak unrolled !
O, that a pen of mountain pine,
And strength to wield the same were mine !
And ink black-mixed in vasty tub,
To write the name of *Beelzebub* !
For who else could that being be
Seen angling then and there by me ?

Sweet friend, what would have been your case
That night, had you been in my place ?

Instead of facing your old master,
Your coward shanks would borne you faster,
And not the less against your will
Than ran the rogues at Springfield hill.*
Methought I'd stay awhile and watch
To see what sort of fry he'd catch ;
Without the power, if not the wish,
To spare you from the list of *fish*.

He tied a rag of *super* cloth
With shining web of silken moth
Around his hook, and thus equipped
His line within the flood he dipped.
But scarce his hook was out of sight
Before, it seemed, he felt a bite ;
And drawing up again his line,
His luck proved better much than mine.
One thing was something strange to see :
As soon as e'er his fish were free
From out the water, they appeared
No more the finny things he reared ;
But metamorphosed seemed the creatures
To human forms with human features.

The fish now dangling on his string
Was but a brainless trifling thing
Such as along a city's walks
With consequential bearing stalks ;

* The discomfiture of the rebels during the Shays insurrection at the arsenal hill in Springfield. The story is told of one man who ran thirty miles, with only an occasional stopping to take breath.

Who owes to tailors' arts and dresses,
The consequence that he possesses ;
And lisp'ing tells his brother asses
How he disdains the 'lower classes.'
NICK merely deigned this word on him
Of smirking face and puny limb :—
'I only want your body, Zany ;
Prime souls are scarce—you have n't *any*.'
For as he looked upon his face
He knew the worthless minim *dace*
Was only fit for making bait ;
And so consigned him to his fate.
Upon his hook he kept the wretch,
And cast, another fish to catch.

A greedy *pike* was darting by,
With hungry jaw and eager eye ;
He saw the game on which to sup,
And in a moment snatched it up.
NICK with the barb-inflicting twitch
Took in his gills a cruel stitch ;
And as he seized the rav'nous pike,
In tone of voice not much unlike
The sound of saw-mill in full motion,
He thus accused him of devotion :

'Give us your hand, my old flint-skinner !
Don't feign surprise, my hopeful sinner !
We've partners been these many years,
And now we'll settle your arrears.
Your credit is so poor of late
Not even I can longer wait ;

Besides, you've aped me in my power,
By seeking whom you might devour ;
You've wronged the poor man of his rights ;
You've robbed the widow of her mites ;
You've often watched, as now, to catch
Some silly addle-headed wretch
More flush of money than of brains,
And turned his pockets for your gains ;
In all your deal and all your diction
The truth was stranger far than fiction,
But tho' mankind were gulled by you ;
One thing is sure, I've got my due.
He said, and with infernal grin
His basket ope'd, and thrust him in.
I noticed as the lid he raised,
The brimstone flame beneath it blazed !

A *bull-head* was the next he took.
The groper bit the naked hook !
Old Satan grinned another smile,
And thus delighted him awhile :

' Old churl, I know you to the letter !
You, too, are pretty deep my debtor ;
A writing for your soul I hold,
The price of which was paid in gold ;
But you were made of *horse-leech* stuff,
And never knew you had enough,
But you must cry for more, until
It's my belief you'll get your fill.
What now avails your hoarded wealth ?
By meanness yours if not by stealth.

What now avails your sneaking life,
Grudging your worthless self and wife
The necessary cost of living,
And knowing no such word as *giving* ?
If aught you 'd had to pay for breath
Long since you would have choked to death.
Faith ! you're *too* mean for me to take you ;
But yet I must, and I will bake you !'
He spoke, and 'neath the basket lid
The poor old selfish miser hid.

With Bible leaves he baited next,
Well filled with many a pious text.
An *eel* observed the piece of writ
And quick enough he swallowed it ;
Which done, he thought to bolt away ;
But *Beelze* thought he'd better stay.

' You slippery dog !' quoth he, ' I knew
What baits of all best suited you.
I've seen you often read the *book*,
In sack-cloth garb with solemn look ;
But never saw you read alone—
'T was when some one was looking on.
I've minded you full oft at meeting,
To give you there a hearty greeting ;
I've heard you with lip-service pray
The devil's kingdom might decay,
But I've to thank you for your zeal
Foremost in furthering my weal ;

I've seen you grieve for negroes' woes
While the poor beast beneath your blows
Has cried like Balaam's ass aloud,
Below your cruel burdens bowed !
I've seen you give to build a church
Enough to freight a bark of birch,
And have it blazoned in the papers
To hide your mean deceitful capers ;
But when your washerwoman came,
With hard work and rheumatics lame,
Begg'd her bill cashed, with tale of sorrow,
You've bid her call again to-morrow ;
Put on your specs and scan'd it o'er,
And swore as Peter never swore.—
No mistress Potiphar could slur you,
Indignant at your stalwart virtue ;
Chaste Joseph's story, let me mention,
Was quite beyond your comprehension,
For had you his temptation known,
Your ' garment' still had been your own.
I'll toast you on my three-tined spit,
You sweet, old, precious hypocrite !'
The wretch, with loud heart-rending screech
Was soon beyond all pity's reach !

Then with another smile infernal
The devil took a certain *Journal*
And fixed it on his hook for bait ;
Nor did he long for nibblers wait.
One of those things which wear a shell,
That half their time in water dwell—

The *snapping kind*, famed for their spite,
Was nothing loath, it seemed, to bite.
As soon as e'er it came afloat,
Behold, it wore a petticoat !
There was no sweet expression tender
By which to designate her gender,
And nothing but the coats she wore
Removed my doubtings on that score.

‘Madam, I hope you ’re well to-night !’
Cried Sootie, as she hove in sight ;
‘But you must know that *moral* journal
Is what I wish to have diurnal,
And o’er the country wide extend,
For I ’m the gainer in the end.’

Her face with ire began to bleach ;
Quoth she, ‘For you that ’s pretty speech !
If you ’re a ‘nigger,’—as your hue
Of sooty black betokens you,—
You ’re quite familiar let me tell you ;
Your distance keep ere I compel you !
My talk about man’s brotherhood
May for profession all be good,
But practice goes another gait,—
A *nigger* my associate !’

Just then thoughts of a different kind
Seemed suddenly to cross her mind,
And she went on in tone more civil :
‘It may be, though, that you ’re the devil ;

What business, pray, have you with me ?
We surely cannot disagree.
Have n't I left my proper sphere
To spread my scandals far and near ?
Left my ' old man,' I swore to cherish,
To cold potatoes or to perish ?
My poor neglected brats forsaken
Till you 've apprenticed them, and taken ?
Have I not fired with zealous rage
To hear rebuke from some old sage,
Or read the apostolic page ?
Sought out each fire-and-tow convention
Fierce for polemics and contention ?
Have I not ever cast aloof
Instruction and ' despised reproof,'
And as a consequence, you see,
Been full of general deviltry ?
And now is this the way it ends ?
Is this the way you ' back your friends ?'

' Softly, my dear,' observed old Sootie,
And seized the bold unblushing beauty ;
' You 've done all this, I 'll not deny—
Or rather it was you and I.
Some things you 've done in boiling blood,
And thought that you was doing good ;
But let me whisper in your ear,
Your mind was very far from clear.
Ignorance of the law, we read,
Is no excuse for evil deed ;

And since you 're fond of so much *fire*,
You shall have more than you desire.
I'll show you where we keep it bright
And never rake it up at night ;
And you shall fill a cozy nitch in
The pot-hook ward of my back-kitchen.'

One thing was certain, if not pretty :
The woman-fish seemed far most *gritty* ;
But zeal is woful without knowledge,
In man or woman, cot or college.

Old NICK got up and took his spawn,
And in a thunder-peal was gone !
It fairly made the tree roots shake,
And stirred the water in the lake.
Some *eel*, I found, had got my line ;
No longer was the tackle mine ;
And as the plashing drops descended,
Waking, my homeward way I wended.
I'll go and give those FISH a warning,
Thought I, as soon as dawns the morning ;
And tell them, ere it is too late,
Be careful how they take the bait.
The hook will prick them, bye and bye,
And Satan then will have a fry.
And you, good soul, for whom I write,
Think of the FISH were caught that night !

EPISTLE TO A DISTINGUISHED FRIEND.

You ask me if I never feel
A sadness o'er my spirit steal,
 A sort of nameless grief?
My honored friend, an answer true
I'll render, and will hint to you
 An inkling of relief:

A sadness o'er my spirit comes
At times, and shrouds it with the glooms
 Of moonless, starless night;
I take a dark prophetic ken,
And envy groppers amongst men
 Who never miss the *light*.

Remembered scenes, remembered words
A sudden thrill of mem'ry's chords,
 Ope to this sombre page;
One feels what he cannot portray,
But just contents himself to say,
 'Gone is the golden age!'

How thoughtless some of Adam's race !
Content their daily round to trace,
 The present is their all ;
They move on one dead level line,
Move, live, and die, and ' make no sign ;'
 They neither climb nor—fall.

And yet, compared with him they 're blest,
Whose spirit never is at rest,
 Whose game is high and low ;
Whose heart's a harp of many strings
From which life's every action brings
 The notes of joy or woe.

We read that DAVID in his haste
Called all men liars ; haste at least
 May be to me imputed ;
If just to live and eat and drink
Is to be *blest*, we 'd better think
 E'en brutes divinely suited.

Now, friend, if honors and a name,
If joys of home and bays of fame,
 Still leave you a ' plucked pigeon ;'
Permit me, drawing to a close,
To recommend for your repose
 A trial of *religion*.

The truly pious man *is* blest ;
To him life's storms that us molest
 Are harmless in their fury ;
Each trial he's prepared to face,
FAITH sits, the judge, upon his case,
 HOPE's angels are his jury.

EPITAPH.

BENEATH the verdant turf and valley's clod,
 From all the toils of life she slumbers well ;
But in the bosom of her Father, GOD,
 And in our faithful hearts she still shall dwell.

FAREWELL TO THE VALLEY.

WRITTEN IN PROSPECT OF IMMEDIATE DEPARTURE.

SCENES of my childhood, loved and dear !

Incentives fond of memory !

Sweet in the greenly budding year,

Joyous in vernal melody !

FATE, iron-hearted, bids me fly ;

Who at his mandate may rebel ?

With swelling heart and tearful eye

I pause to take a sad farewell.

Your floods, Connecticut, adieu !

Your torrent's solemn, ceaseless roar.

What blissful moments I review

Along your winding, woody shore !

How oft beneath umbrageous elm,

There wandering, I have paused to rest,

And seen the verge of fairy realm

Mirrored within thy trembling breast !

Farewell, sweet ever-flowing brook,

From winter's frigid fetters clear ;

I give thee now a parting look,

I lend a tributary tear.

The years to me that careful grow,
Thy careless murmurs still prolong;
Could he that muses o'er thy flow,
Awake with thee undying song!

Farewell dear hamlet of my own,
Endeared by every tender tie;
Oft shalt thou give to memory tone
When weary leagues between us lie!
Farewell the social hearth where Love,
A heaven-commissioned angel came,—
Strong as the faith can mountains move,*
Warm as the crepitating flame.

With heart-felt grief, farewell my friends!
Oft such we hailed; as such we part;
If parting to life's verge extends,
Till then my hand—yea, more, my *heart*;
Farewell my foes, if such there be,
For I myself am foe to none;
If any would have injured me,
They 've failed in what they would have done.

Sweet valley of my birth, adieu!
The cradle of my rustic muse;
And shall a bard departing now,
The tribute of a lay refuse?
As soon might Phœbus yield to night
When glowing high at Summer's noon!

* Matthew xxi chapter, 21 verse.

As soon his brilliant blaze of light
Eclipse the pale-faced midnight moon !

These weary feet of mine have strayed
Before from thee a mighty way ;
With Fortune's flying foot-ball played—
Myself in stranger lands astray.
I wist not whither I was led,
My life as changeful as a dream ;
Now blanket-clad and venison-fed,
My drink the Indian-haunted stream.

Anon my home a crowded street,
Tamed to a city's dust and noise,
Where soul is lost in vain conceit,
And pride the nobler man destroys.
And if thy wandering son has seen
Sights which might gladden one to see,
Or brighter climes attractive been,
Fain would he dwell, dear vale, in thee.

Give to the son of nature wild
The romance of the mighty West ;
Give to the fop—the name of *child* ;
Give sumptuous viands to the guest ;
Give to the brave, adventurous tar
The boisterous music of the sea ;
But shine for once, propitious star,
And give my valley-home to me !

Scenes of my childhood, loved and dear !
Fast imaged on my memory !
All sweetly glimmering thro' a tear,
Enchanting now with melody ;
Fate, with harsh mandate, bids me fly ;
With stern resolve I nerve my mind ;
There is a POWER that casts the die,
And to that power I'm resigned.

EPITAPH ON A LAZY FELLOW.

IF keeping Sabbaths saves the soul,
This man's is now in heaven ;
One in the week sufficed not him—
He *hallowed* all the seven.

THE MOON IN THE WILDERNESS.

It was a wild and far-off land
Where nature's savage realms expand
Arrayed by her primeval hand
In virgin dress ;
Where stretched, untouched by axe or brand,
The wilderness.

Beyond the bounds of our frontier,
Where Indian tribes pursue the deer,
And light the council-fire in fear
Of white man's face,
Who prowls for them and plunder near,
Black-souled and base !

It was a chill December night ;
The ice had locked the waters tight,
And winter's cheerless mantle white
O'er earth was spread,
And nature seemed all lifeless quite—
Cold, drear, and dead.

By fickle, varying fortune led,
Like Crusoe or the Raven-fed,
I spread my blanket for a bed,
 But not of rest ;
For sleep had from my eyelids fled,
 And peace, my breast.

Beneath a rattling roof I lay,
And thro' the walls of crannied clay
I heard old Boreas whistling play,
 The drear hours long,
And shivering wished for power to stay
 His fiendish song.

As if to make the scene more drear,
At times was wafted to my ear
A howl so wild and dread to hear,
 Like consternation ;
That one who scarcely felt a fear,
 Felt desolation.

Then as I turned my restless eye
And saw the full moon sailing high,
Slow thro' the wintry midnight sky,
 Uprose to mind
Sad, bitter thoughts, and pensively
 I thus repined :

Roll on, bright orb of frigid light,
That shinest on this cheerless night,
Cold splendor in thy blaze !

How different to the human race
May seem this night thy placid face,
 And thy unwarming rays !
Thou shinest on the rich and poor,
 The homeless, and the HOME ;
Thy light is on the cottage door,
 And on the lordly dome.

One, peering from the halls of ease,
Abroad thy silver splendor sees,
 And calls this beauteous night ;
His hearth sends out a ruddy glow,
Mirth, wine and music round him flow,
He hears the bitter blasts that blow,—
 They lull him with delight.

Thou seest the selfish and the vile,
Him whose black heart is full of guile
 Tow'rd man, his brother dear ;
A sort of ravening human wolf,
More base than him whose howl aloof,
 So dismal, I can hear.

And yet he wants for nought, mayhap,
But, pampered, sits in Comfort's lap,
 And snarls with thankless scorn ;
Or turns his eye with envious gleam
On those around, whom he may deem
 More blest by Plenty's horn.

Thou shinest on the cottage roof
Where avarice may find reproof;
 Its inmates lack for show,
And yet with sweet contentment blest,
Perhaps this hour they calmly rest
 Without a cause for wo.

Thou look'st on my New England home.
Ah! why should Fortune tempt to roam,
 With falsely promised boon;
Alluring on with fair display,
Seeming at hand, while far away
 As thou art, mournful moon!
E'en so the child, when in the sky
 He hails thee first with joy,
Puts forth his hand with cheated eye,
 To grasp the shining toy.

Slow down the west went coursing on
The moon, to leave me soon alone,
When Boreas in more plaintive tone
 Spoke thro' the wall;
I listened in the solemn moan,
 An answering call:—

‘ What gloomy thoughts pervade thy mind
Incited by the winter wind!
Compare thy case, sad tho' it be,
To forms of sterner misery;

All have their part of ills to bear,
Nor deem thine own the lion's share.

‘ See the poor beggar shivering lie,
Stretched by the cold highway to die
Inviting to his aged breast
Death's dart ; for that may give him rest.

‘ Hear the wrecked sailor's drowning cry,
Beneath some wild inclement sky.
Think what despair must overwhelm his soul
As icy billows round him roll,
And roaring rush upon their prey,
From friends and country far away.
Think how with joy his feet would tread
The flooring of thy humble shed.

‘ Think of the prisoner's wretched doom,
Pining within a dungeon's gloom ;
What groans bespeak his mental pains !
How hopeless sound his clanking chains !
Perhaps he counts the winged flight
Of hours that measure out the night,
And knows that death awaits his prey,
Whene'er the sun shall bring the day.

‘ Think of the bondman's hopeless woe !
Can you his life of sorrows know ?
Canst feel his galling fetters weigh
Upon thy limbs so heavily ?

Art thou compelled to breathe his sigh
In vain for blessed liberty ?

‘Hear’st thou the maniac shrieking wild,
From reason, hope, and home exiled ;
Who to the freezing wintry air
Mutters the incoherent prayer ?

‘Think of the countless pallid train
This night are racked on beds of pain ?
Where sickness trims the feeble light
That glimmers thro’ the weary night ?
Compare their hapless lot with thine,
And no more in dejection pine.’

I heard, and felt reproof—resolved
Repining thoughts to rest ;
My heart in thankfulness dissolved
That I so much was blest.

And then the same instructive strain
Sank to a *lullaby* ;
And when from sleep awaked again,
The sun was in the sky.

THE PRAIRIE COCK.

A TRUE STORY.

ONE day, when Spring's returning sun
Had thawed the frozen ground,
And made the wintry drifts to run
Dissolving round,
I sallied forth with shouldered gun,
For shooting bound.

Glad once to see the sun again,
And heedless where I strayed,
I wandered to a prairie plain,
And halting made
To look about, nor yet in vain
The scene surveyed.

For as I stood with ears erect,
And vision nowise blurred,
I in the distance did detect,
And plainly heard
The hollow voice, I did suspect,
Of prairie-bird.—

(A vaunting fowl, this prairie-cock—
A vain and silly thing ;
But oft the hunter's skill he 'll mock
And take to wing ;
And from a thousand in a flock
Not one he 'll bring.)—

Thinking himself secure, no doubt,
The distance was so great,
The cock began to strut about
At furious rate,
With wings dropp'd down and tail spread out,
And step elate.

The sight was tempting for a shot—
Tho' distant, he was bold ;
The story, then, it matters not
How soon 't is told :
I sent a bullet to the spot
And *laid him cold*.

And as I stooped to pick him up
I thus soliliquized :
' Poor thing ! your overflowing cup
Was soon capsized ;
Upon your carcass I shall sup,
Unless surprised.

' I'll gather from this emblem small
A moral, if I may ;

Thy fate reminds me of a fall
Before to-day ;—
PRIDE, let it tower however tall,
Must sure decay.

‘ How oft we mark the self-conceit
That struts and shuffles by,
That in the gutter of the street
Ere long may lie !’
Reader, ere Pride tip-toe thy feet,
Turn back and fly.

IMPROMPTU.

ON SEEING A FELLOW NODDING IN CHURCH.

THIS surely *is* a day of rest ;
But better you ’d improve it,
To sink your head upon your breast,
And cease so much to move it.

THE WAY IT IS DONE.

A TALE WITH A MORAL.

'T WAS early one morn, in a log-cabin land,
Where the tallest air-castles, however, are planned,
Where swagger is often mistaken for sense,
And *faith* is a thing of no small consequence.
I mean not that faith which is taught in the Bible,—
The backwoods professor would sue for a libel ;
The faith of the Book sees a mansion in heaven,
But this sees a town where a stake is just driven.

'T was early one morn ; 't was the fourth of July ;
Some time must elapse ere the sun lit the sky ;
And, thinking o'er night of the glorious day,
'T was natural my dreams, too, should wander that way.
So I dreamed, as a Yankee boy frequently will,
Of Lexington, Concord, and old Bunker Hill ;
Saw the red-coated column up Bunker arise ;
Heard old Putnam's speech 'bout the 'white of their
eyes.'

They neared the redoubt, and the guns bristled o'er ;
But just as the Yankees their volley would pour,
 Martial sounds 'gan to rise,
 And I opened my eyes,
And thought 't was a part of the dream gone before.
 But I listened, so still ;
 It was not Bunker Hill,
But without in the street they were making uproar ;
 While a man with a fife
 Squealed as if for his life,
And a drum put in shakes Ole Bull might adore.

Sleep fled past a doubt ; so I dress'd and went out ;
Had you seen what I saw, you'd have laughed with a
 shout :

The offspring of Orpheus, blowing the fife,
By the ' cut of his jib,' was n't *long* for this life ;
For five feet and five I should judge the utmost
Longitudinal metre his person could boast ;
But nature, kind dame, had made up, it would seem,
Deficit in length, by the ' breadth of his beam.'
His hat was ' caved in'—had of brim scarce a bit ;
He wore a short jacket, too small for a fit ;
And a ludicrous thought flitted over my mind,
That the fifer was very *full breasted* behind.

The drummer, beside him, personified Saul ;
As gaunt as a grey-hound, and bony, and tall.
 But ever I can
 Describe you this man,

I'll state the condition of both—that is all :

Though scarcely 't was morn,

They 'd both had their *corn*,

Were so drunk, that to stand, they must lean on the
wall ;

The din and devotion

Inspired them with motion,

At March ! they would go ; but at Halt ! they would
sprawl.

Were I good with the charcoal, my tale I'd adorn
With a sketch of the drummer that auspicious morn.

A view of his figure—a side view—to me

Looked, more than aught else, like a bad figure 3 ;

His hat, which had *suffered*, was cocked on one side ;

His breeks were too short, by a foot, and too wide ;

On the toe of his left foot, and heel of his right,

He hitched to the tune of the ' Soldier's Delight.'

His aspect was fierce, with a sprinkling of woe,

His eyes dead a-head, and his arms a-kimbo ;

The poor fifer, I fear,

When he staggered too near,

Received from his elbows a cruel side blow ;

A pause would occur,

A *trill* or a *slur*,

But the roll of the drum was unbroken, I know ;

For the sticks down would come

On the head of the drum,

And the way rub-a-dub rattled out was n't slow.

The rabble behind them were trundling a gun,
 About a ten-pounder, I judged by the *tun* ;
 But foremost, and leading the glorious van,
 Marched a man, 't is my plan, to ban, if I can.
 In his gait, in his dress, in his dignified air,
 With his ' brethren in arms' like a prince he'd compare ;
 He'd striven for office, he'd striven for fame,
 He longed for a deed to emblazon his name.
 The law was his hobby, at least by pretence ;
 He was great on a case without need of defence ;
 And his talents, beside, most decidedly were,
 For the use of his countrymen, *la militaire*. [tion,
 How he lived, the Lord knows ; but 't was my calcula-
 It was partly on *faith*, partly on speculation.
 He appeared to feel grand ; yea, he felt rather bigger
 Than the man who had seen Gen'ral Washington's
 ' nigger !'

But I'll prove him full soon, if my pen does n't fail,
 A ' creature of circumstance ;' so to our tale.

I joined in the march, with an inkling of fun ;
 The music rolled on, and they trundled the gun.

They came to a spot—

A square vacant lot,

Called after the name of the great Washington.

The gun was now tried,

The match was applied,

And there they ' let sliver' to herald the sun.

It looked like a fight,

For overcome quite

The martial musicians lay stretched like the *done*.

Bang! bang! went the gun, till there wanted but one
More shot, and the job for the sunrise was done ;
'T was likely to fail, for I heard a man swear
That nothing to serve for a wadding was there.
To fail in completion the shame would be great,
Amounting almost to the shame of defeat.
No! that would n't do ; they must give the last shot,
But where was a wadding at hand to be got ?
Our hero stood near, in contemplative mood,
Ruminating a speech, as a cow does her cud ;
But, sudden, a thought !
His pocket he sought
And drew forth a handkerchief dirty as mud.
' Here ! take that ! my lad,
And use it, e-gad !
The gun shall not fail for the want of a wad !'
Soon the gun roared anew,
Into shreds the rag flew ;—
' There goes my best handkerchief—silk one—by —— !'

A drizzle set in ; and the gun was now housed ;
But fame, for our hero, was fully aroused.
Her echoing trump was at once to her mouth ;
All over the District, east, west, north and south,
His name spread abroad ; and, spreading, the story
Gathered in bulk, while it gathered him glory ;
Till, by time that the story had back again got,
In the ' last war ' he'd killed twenty men at one shot !

The next thing we see in the ' People's Gazette ;'
Our hero for Congress his visage has set.

The editor, there, Mr. Butcher's-meat's-*ris*,
Comes out with a column of something like this :

'It is time for the people to rouse from their sleep !

The wolves are abroad in the clothing of sheep ;

But give the pull long,

The pull very strong,

The pull altogether, and we 'll go it steep !

'T is our duty to sow,

Though our readers must know,

No personal benefit hoping to reap,

Come, bards, tune your lays

To our candidate's praise,

And we to the music our eye balls will keep.

Our man is a patriot, true as the sun ;

Familiarly known as the ' SON-OF-A-GUN !'

For what man but he, on that glorious day

When patriots gather, as patriots may ;

When likely to fail was the national round,

And brave men e'en wept when no wadding was found ;

Who but he would suffer, unanswered, we say,

His own private wardrobe to be shot away ?

Let his name, like the clouds, o'er Columbia scud !

Let his name brightly gleam in the annals of blood !

Let this deed of his fame be embalmed with the tale

Of Putnam's bold feat, or the hanging of Hale !'

Success seemed more sure, as election drew nigher ;

But one ' circumstance' more knocked his fat in the fire ;

For lo ! there was one

That morn, by the gun,


Who did not exactly belong to the squire ;
 So merely for sport
 He spread the report,
The candidate was as profane as a liar ;
 That he stood on the spot
 When the 'kerchief was shot,
And the squire swore so bad he was forced to retire !

Enough—for the other side sought out this man ;
A dollar in hand, and a swig at the can.
Deposition was made 'fore a magistrate lawful ;
The man swore upon oath that the swearing was awful ;
And next day appeared in the ' Voice of the People '
A yarn half as long as a meeting house steeple.
Therein 't was shown clear, as the light of the sun,
That they should not vote for the Son-of-a-gun.
They called on the people to rally anew
And vote for their candidate, called ~~the~~ ' TRUE BLUE.'
He had all the other man's patriot pride ;
Was rather inclined to be pious, beside ;
Sure, slander pursued him, but still 't wasn't true
He once was indicted for stealing an ewe ;
He held to equality when people meet,—
Been seen shaking hands with a ' nig' in the street ;
And as for his courage, why, blest be his name,
He had entered a house that was roaring on flame !
And saved, at the imminent risk of his life,
A print representing John Rogers and wife ;
Then hurrah for True-Blue ! for he only can save
Our country from Ruin's oblivious grave !

The contest grew fiercer each following day,
The young and the old of both sides joined the fray ;
 Some voters were bought,
 Some duels were fought ;
One man had a part of his *thigh* shot away ;
 Both editors wrote,
 The people would quote,
The candidates mounted the stump for display ;
 While some *Oberlin* men,
 To the number of ten,
Bethought it a matter for which they should pray.

The day came at last, the ballots were cast,
And both party's colors were nailed to the mast ;
 But the *Oberlin* men
 To the number of ten,
Struck the friends of Son-of-a-gun all aghast !
 For neither they knew
 The ' Gun' or 'True Blue.'

But thought it the safest to vote for the last.
And this, as their reasons for voting, they gave :
 A man who would greet,
 A poor nig in the street,
Must certainly be a good friend of the slave ;
 And a man who would swear,
 As profane as the 'square,
Must certainly be an ungodly old knave.

 'True Blue' was returned by majority ten,
And those were the votes of the *Oberlin* men.

M O R A L .

Let every 'constituent' reading this scrawl,
Who's seen an election, and lived through it all,
With deepest of blushes acknowledge, forsooth,
That the foregoing tale isn't far from the truth.
When a president's up, or lower the grade
Of seekers for office, a hubbub is made ;
A green one, perusing the prints at such times,
Would deem they'd selected a man for his crimes.
And though we can't say but a ' Son-of-a-gun,'
Or another ' True Blue,' too often is run,
 'T would be better by far
 To have less wordy war,
Less blazonry, billingsgate, twitting, and pun ;
 For it all ends in self,
 Both sides want the pelf,—
Division takes place when the battle is won ;
 While some Oberlin men,
 To the number of ten,
Or more, just step in, and the business is done.

EPISTLE TO A WESTERN POET.

January 31, 1848.

DEAR BUCKEYE :—Are you hale and well,
And have you time on this to dwell ?—
Had I but wings, my feet to spell
 With flying power,
My knuckles on your door should tell
 In half an hour !

• The time will come, I'll bet the flip,
When one may take a match, a chip,
And mount a broomstick, with his hip
 Astride a kettle,
And up steam, till his speed outstrip
 The wind, a little.

In this our day and generation,
In this our mighty Yankee nation,
We've but to make a '*calculation*,'
 And next we hear
E'en red-haired, sanguine Expectation,
 Is distanced, clear.

We write by lightning ; next no wonder
If we should talk by means of thunder ;
Cotton will now rend rocks asunder,
 But, bye and bye,
A cat-tail, thrust a mountain under,
 Will blow 't sky high !

O, mighty land !—including Texas !
Star-gazing statesmen soon will vex us :—
The moon they 'll say, cries out, ' Annex us,
 And make us one ;'
And other nations will expect us
 To hitch 'em on.

But sir, since you are pleased to care
What my ' designs and prospects' are,
And wish ' biography' to share
 My brief epistle,—
There must be blown, you 're well aware,
 Ego's own whistle.

Here, on the spot from whence I write,
My eyes first opened to the light ;
Whether a rhyme was squealed on sight—
 'Tis safe to doubt it ;
My recollection is not quite
 Distinct about it.

Still, sir, 't is hard to note the time
When first I perpetrated rhyme ;
A whisper of the art sublime
 Aye hung around me ;
The same in ' slips' and youthful prime
 The muses found me.

Down Nature's lanes I loved to stray,
Her lamp poured light around my way,
Art, with her polish-giving ray,
 Shone not upon it ;
To her I'll never have to pay
 For one poor sonnet.

If Nature does not make the man,
No famous school or college can ;
Though parrot-like he learns to scan
 His Latin grammar,
His knowledge goes no farther than
 The tutor's hammer.

When in my teens, by Fancy led,
Far westward ho ! I ' drew my sled ;'
There hunter-clad, and hunter-fed,
 I roved and learned ;
Shot deer, wild western romance read,
 And prairies burned.

Your lakes, like shoreless seas, in-land ;
Your prairies that like space expand ;
Your streams, and mighty woods, are grand
 Beyond my praise ;
But dear New England will command
 My heart and lays.

Her mountains bleak, her sheltered dales,
Her Borean blasts, and heathful gales,
Her brooks, her fertile river-vales,
 Her ocean-coast ;
These, till the lamp of nature fails,
 Inspire me most.

Here, too, was given to the light
The rural lays these scenes incite ;
Hence, lately that *Thanksgiving Night*
 Was blown abroad,
About which you were pleased to write
 And kindly laud.

I may not like LONGFELLOW chime
A ' Psalm of life,' in strains sublime ;
Or reach that high poetic clime
 Where BRYANT flies ;
Where DRAKE, with his bold bannered rhyme,*
 Neglected lies.

* Vide " The American Flag"—J. R. Drake.

I may not paint with sweet NAT. WILLIS
The beauty of exquisite Phillis ;
Or vie with any bard whose skill is
 In flowery diction ;
You know their soul inspiring rill is
 Fount, Classic Fiction.

Without the power if not desire,
With these to tempt the regions higher,
My coat of arms the rural lyre
 And good old plough ;
These, bright with *patriotic fire*,
 Will serve me, now.

'Gainst Fame I may not breathe a ban ;
She's dear to the poetic clan,
More so by far, it may be, than
 To *Clays* and *Catos* ;
But fame will never give a man
 Pork and potatoes.

So round and round the furrowed plain
Anon I'll chase the plough again ;
And dropping egotistic strain,
 Now sign my card ;
Meanwhile, yours truly will remain
 The 'PEASANT BARD.'

EPISTLE

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE ADDRESS, "TO THE 'PEASANT
BARD,' MOUNTED ON PEGASUS, AND TUNING HIS LYRE."

JUNE 23, 1850.

Last evening, seated in my door,
(Day in the cornfield being o'er,)
I took the 'RAMBLER' to explore
 Its pages fair,
And note what news the week before
 Was fresh and rare.

But thirst for news the moment fled,
That I your kind address had read ;
Visions of laurels round my head
 Uprose in place.
(How vanity, by flattery led,
 Will stalk apace !)

But no ; you're not accused by me
Of using fulsome flattery ;
Of something more like sympathy
 It seems to savor ;
So blow your granite whistle free,
 Sans fear, *sans* favor.

That 'winged beast' that I bestride
Must go free-will, if I would ride ;
He'll bear no spur or whip o'er hide
To urge him faster ;
Indeed, I ne'er could quite decide
Which was the master.

For when upon his back I spring
To urge him,—he's another thing ;
Not from a feather of his wing
The dust he'll shake ;
That 'lyre' is tuneless,—not a string
Will music make.

Then off I get, his halter slip,
Bring down the lyre, thwack ! o'er his hip,
And cry, begone ! you lazy rip !
Stupid and sullen !
And off he is with pendent lip
Munching a mullen.

No more your bardship minds him then,
Till, lo ! anon he comes again
With head erect and flowing mane,
And eyes a-glowing ;
And *presto*, over hill and plain
We're soaring, going.

Though puffed with praise, or starved so lean
By cold neglect, his ribs be seen,
Jockies shall never call him mean

Amongst the mighty ;
I would not ' swap ' him—no, not e'en
For Zack's ' *old Whitey*.'*

And now, one word about your ' prayer ;'
I've stated matters as they are ;
Such as he is I cannot spare
My beast of story ;
The ' Peasant Bard ' he yet must bear
To realms of glory !

But this I give you,—note it well :
Hard by Parnassus one may dwell
And learn to poise a sounding shell,
Or tune a lyre,
But nature's GOD must give the *spell*—
The sacred fire.

* The famous war-horse of President Taylor.

IMPROMPTU,

ON A DISTANT VIEW OF MOUNT MONADNOCK.

YONDER the Mountain-monarch looms—

The eye with grandeur fills ;

His head begirt with cloudy glooms,

His foot with woody hills !

Mighty Monadnock ! what art thou,

So regal, lofty, grand,

To HIM who heaved thy heavenward brow,

And graved thee by HIS hand ?

A pebble, by Almighty plan

Cast on the sands of Time,

To show the little creature, man,

GOD'S trifles are sublime.

A POOR MAN'S EPITAPH.

No more by Fortune's freaks abused,
No more by brother man misused,
No more of Folly's deeds accused—

His actions done,
With Nature's works no more amused,
Here lies her son !

When Ruin, demon-like, assailed him
He ne'er complained that trouble ailed him,
For hope of heaven never failed him

While life remained,
And seeing Death approach, he hailed him
With joy unfeigned.

He's gone of better clime in quest,
Where all the 'weary are at rest ;'
And said, with fears no more oppress,
He hoped to rise
And enter, as a welcome guest,
In Paradise.

Pilgrim, who strays this hillock near,
 Didst know the one who slumbers here ?
 His foibles shun with cautious fear,
 His virtues heed ;
 Yea, follow VIRTUE wheresoe'er
 Her steps may lead !

IMPROMPTU,

TO THE CHARTER OAK, (HARTFORD) ON BEING REFUSED
 PERMISSION, WITH OTHERS, TO APPROACH THE
 TREE, SEPT. 19, 1839.

A *clever* de'il, in Eden's yard,
 Kept the forbidden tree ;
 But who, approach to thee debar'd,
 Can say as much of thee ?

INFERIOR ANIMALS AFFORD INSTRUCTION TO MAN.

As the loquacious geese upon the wing,
Beguiling labor, never cease to sing ;
As the poor bee, half drowned in soaking rain,
Dries his wet wing and buzzes forth again ;
As the good dog obeys his master's will,
Thro' good and evil his companion still ;
As the meek lamb, beneath the butcher's knife,
In conscious innocence resigns its life—
So, man, on thee when life's hard labors press,
Let your heart sing, and make the burden less.
When Mischief's ill-brewed rains have drenched it thro',
Dry your wet cloak and brave the storm anew.
From your own dog a golden lesson learn,
And ne'er to sacred friendship traitor turn.
When death shall lift his hand to stop thy breath,
Look up with innocence and welcome death !

SONGS.



SONGS.

LAMENT OF THE CHEROKEE.

AIR :—‘ Exile of Erin.’

O, soft falls the dew, in the twilight descending,
And tall grows the shadowy hill on the plain ;
And night o’er the far distant forest is bending,
Like the storm-spirit, dark, o’er the tremulous main ;
But midnight enshrouds my lone heart in its dwelling,
A tumult of woe in my bosom is swelling,
And a tear, unbecoming the warrior, is telling
That Hope has abandoned the brave Cherokee !

Can a tree that is torn from its root by the fountain,
The pride of the valley, green-spreading and fair,
Can it flourish removed to the rock of the mountain,
Unwarmed by the sun and unwatered by care ?
Though Vesper be kind her sweet dew in bestowing,
No life-giving brook in its shadow is flowing,
And when the chill winds of the desert are blowing,
So droops the transplanted and lone Cherokee !

Loved graves of my sires ! have I left you forever ?

How melted my heart when I bade you adieu !

Shall joy light the face of the Indian ?—ah, never !

While memory sad has the power to renew.

As flies the fleet deer when the blood-hound is started,

So fled winged Hope from the poor broken-hearted ;

O, could she have turned, ere for ever departed,

And beckoned with smiles to her sad Cherokee !

Is it the low wind through the wet willows rushing,

That fills with wild numbers my listening ear ?

Or is some hermit-rill, in the solitude gushing,

The strange-playing minstrel, whose music I hear ?

'T is the voice of my father, slow, solemnly stealing,

I see his dim form, where the gloom gathers, kneeling,

To the God of the white man, the CHRISTIAN, appealing ;

He prays for the foe of the dark Cherokee !

Great Spirit of Good, whose abode is the heaven,

Whose wampum of peace is the bow in the sky,

Wilt Thou give to the wants of the clamorous raven,

Yet turn a deaf ear to my piteous cry ?

O'er the ruins of home, o'er my heart's desolation,

No more shalt thou hear my unblest lamentation ;

For death's dark encounter I make preparation,

He hears the last groan of the wild Cherokee !

THE ADIEU.

AIR :—‘ Irish Emigrant’s Lament.’

SAD was the hour when for the sea
My Willie left his home !
The day was bright with spring’s delight,
But round my heart was gloom.
I thought on ocean’s perils wild,
The changes, too, of years ;
That waters wide should us divide
Forever, were my fears.

I see him as at parting, now ;
His calm and manly air ;
His eye that glowed, no tear bestowed,
Yet sorrow still was there ;
He grasped me warmly by the hand,
He murmured but my name :
The words were few at our adieu,
For words we could not frame.

The wind blows freshly from the sea,
A ship is off the shore ;
But ah ! I know no breeze will blow
To waft poor Willie o’er.
Full low on ocean’s bed he lies,
Above, the billows play ;
The waters wide will us divide
Forever,—till THE DAY !

THE BANKS OF MAUMEE.

AIR :—‘ The Hermit.’

I STOOD in a dream on the banks of Maumee ;
’T was Autumn, and nature seemed wrapt in decay ;
The wind moaning swept thro’ the shivering tree,
The leaf from the bough drifted slowly away ;
The gray-eagle screamed on the marge of the stream,
The solitudes answered the Bird of the Free ;
All lonely and sad was the scene of my dream,
And mournful the hour on the banks of Maumee.

A form passed before me—a vision of one
Who mourned for his nation, his country, and kin ;
He walked on the shores, now deserted and lone,
Where the homes of his tribe, in their glory, had been ;
And thought after thought o’er his sad spirit stole,
As wave follows wave o’er the turbulent sea ;
And thus lamentation he breathed from his soul
O’er the ruins of home, on the banks of Maumee :—

As the hunter at morn, in the snows of the wild,
Recalls to his mind the sweet visions of night
When sleep, softly falling, his sorrows beguiled,
And opened his eyes in the land of delight,—
So backward I muse on the dream of my youth ;
Ye peace-giving hours ! O, when did ye flee ?
When the Christian neglected his pages of truth,
And the Great Spirit frowned on the banks of Maumee.

Oppression has lifted his iron-like rod
And smitten my people again and again ;
The whiteman has said there is justice with God,—
Will he hear the poor Indian before him complain ?
Sees he not how his children are worn and oppres'd ?
How driven in exile ?—O ! can he not see ?
And I, in the garments of heaviness dress'd,
The last of my tribe on the banks of Maumee ?

Ye trees ! on whose branches my cradle was hung,
Must I yield you a prey to the axe and the fire ?
Ye shores ! where the chant of the pow-wow was sung,
Have ye witnessed the light of the council expire ?
Pale ghosts of my fathers, who battled of yore !
Is the Great Spirit *just* in the land where ye be ?
While life lasts dejected I'll wander this shore,
And join you at last from the banks of Maumee.

THE MINUTE-MAN.

It was on the banks of Hoosic, in days of long ago,
Where then, as now, its waters bless the farmer as they
flow ;—

It was in the vale of Hoosic a father and his son
Were dwelling, on the day before the day at Bennington.

Along the river stretching was spread a fertile plain ;
There sire and son were thrusting in the hook amidst the
grain ;

While near at hand their cottage stood half hidden from
the sight,

By trees that wooed the birds by day and sheltered them
by night.

The good wife plied her needle within the cottage door ;
Her babe the cat was watching, catching flies upon the
floor ;

It was a sweet domestic scene,—sweet both to sire and son,
That blessed them on the day before the day at Benning-
ton.

When suddenly, and vision-like, before them there appeared,

A form of soldier bearing, full of martial presence reared ;
He was clad in regimentals—a gleaming sword his pride ;
The father heard his errand, and he laid his hook aside.

Then toward the cottage went the sire, with calm, determined air,

And took from o'er the mantle-tree his gun that rested there ;

Farewell ! farewell, dear wife ! said he ; farewell, my children dear !

My country calls aloud for me, I may not linger here !

‘ Weep not for me to break mine heart,’ he spoke like sainted PAUL,

Behold I leave you, knowing not what thing shall me befall ;

My life is staked for LIBERTY—in after years, my son,
Remember this, the day before the day at Bennington !

That son is now an aged man, his head is silvered o'er ;
He tills the same plantation that his father tilled before ;
And lessons many he has read in life's histrionic page,
His words are those of sound import, his wisdom that of age.

He's a lover, too, of LIBERTY ; and to his children tells
This reason why that love so strong within his bosom dwells :
‘ Last time I saw my sire alive was when he took his gun,
And left us on the day before the day at Bennington.’

THE EAGLES OF COLUMBIA.

A NATIONAL SONG.

THE Eagles of Columbia !
How gallantly they fly,
With vengeance in their awful swoop,
With lightning in their eye !—
When perched upon our standard bright
Above the stripes and stars,
They shall wave o'er the brave
In the thunder-storm of Mars.

The colors of Columbia !—
Her son who roams the earth,
Tho' frozen at the icy pole,
Or scorched on Cancer's hearth,
Shall look upon them, and forget
His sufferings and woes,
For they wave o'er the brave
Where the breeze of ocean blows.

The soldier, ere the signal flies
Along the waiting line,
Beholds his country's bird with pride
And kindles at the shrine !

Resolved thro' blood and carnage dire
To bear it safely, for
It shall wave o'er the brave
In the sulphur cloud of war.

The sailor, ere the foeman strikes,
Aloft shall glance his eye
To where, fast-nailed for victory,
Columbia's colors fly ;
And when the vollied thunder breaks,
Forth-ushering death and woe,
They shall wave o'er the brave
On the gory decks below.

When Peace, with all her smiling train,
Moves sweetly thro' the land,
And patriots to their homes retire
And sheathe the glittering brand—
Victoriously our Eagles fly
When war's commotions cease ;
They shall wave o'er the brave
In the stilling beams of Peace.

FREEDOM'S OWN.

NEW ENGLAND is a glorious land,
Fast anchored by the sea !
Her mountains high that lift the sky
Are altars of the free !
Are altars of the free, and they
Are Freedom's bulwarks bold ;
Though all the world defiance hurled,
She's safe in her strong hold.

Forth on her mission round the world
Fair Freedom sought a home ;
Now paused and wrought, now battles fought,
But still compelled to roam ;
Till soaring, eagle-like, she saw
New England's hills appear,
Then ceased her flight, and with delight
She came and rested here.

And here she built her sacred shrine,
Here lit her Vestal flame ;
Here watched and feared, a race she reared,
And called them by her name.

New England's sons *are* Freedom's own,—

The tyrant is their scorn ;

No earthly power can chain an hour

The true New England born.

New England's sons are everywhere,

In every clime they roam ;

They're brave, they're strong, and never long

Forgetful of their home.

New England's dead are everywhere,

In every clime they rest ;

And ocean's wave is th' mighty grave

Of her noblest and her best.

Then here's to Freedom's blessed name !

And here is to her own !

Yet land and sea her own shall be,

And tyrants be unknown.

We'll spread her colors to the breeze,

We'll bear her eagle crest ;

Then should she roam she'll find a home

Wherever she may rest !

DOWN BY THE BROOK WHERE WILLOWS
GREEN.

Down by the brook, where willows green
Spring to the zephyr and the sun ;
Where the bright wavelets, glancing seen,
Eternal murmur as they run ;—
I pause to ponder on their flow ;
While forward swift the waters run,
Backward as swift will memory go
To days when life with me begun.

As dreamy music fills my ear,—
The voiceful hum of waters sweet,
The long, bright days again appear
That used my infant eyes to greet.
Companions of those golden hours
Rise from the past, and round me stand ;
Long since they perished ' like the flowers !'
Long since they sought the spirit land !

I love to think upon those days ;
The early found, the early lost ;
Aye memory sings her sweetest lays
When strung her lyre at dearest cost.
The cares of life the present fill,
They all engross, the heart, the hand ;
But from the past, at times, there will
Break gleamings like the better land.

‘BY THE DEEP NINE!’

WHEN wearing off the shore with the breakers on the lee,
And shrill winds are piping to the thunder of the sea;
As the shoal deeper grows, it becalms the sailor's fears,
As trembling he listens, and the saving call he hears:—

‘By the deep nine! by the deep nine!’

When murky is the night, and the misty wind is free,
When black scowls the sky above, and blacker, still, the
sea;

When doubtful is the land-fall that dimly looms a-head,
Then ye 'll heave to, my hearties!—bear a hand with
the lead:—

‘By the deep nine! by the deep nine!’

Lashed fast o'er the drenching waves, the hardy sailor
stands;

His eye is quick and certain, and ready are his hands;
Right cheerily o'erhead, then, the plunging lead he
swings,—

Down, deeper down, it goes, and he musically sings:—

‘By the deep nine! by the deep nine!’

And ye, who are voyaging o’er life’s tempestuous sea !
 Let judgment be your compass, your lead let prudence be ;
 Should passion’s current take you towards a wrecking reef,
 Be wise to put about soon as prudence sounds relief :—

‘ By the deep nine ! by the deep nine ! ’

The gallant ship, the UNION, our brave old fathers built ;
 Her keel was laid in heart’s-blood of willing martyrs spilt !
 Then beware ! ye who sail her along the flood of time,
 Keep her bearings, keep her soundings,—she’ll float to
 the chime :—

‘ By the deep nine ! by the deep nine ! ’

COLUMBIA RULES THE SEA.

THE pennon flutters in the breeze,
The anchor comes a-peak ;
Let fall !—sheet home !—the briny foam
And ocean's waste we seek.
The booming gun speaks our adieu ;
Fast fades our native shore ;—
Columbia free shall rule the sea,
Britannia ruled of yore !

We go the tempest's wrath to dare—
The billows' maddened play ;
Now climbing high against the sky,
Now rolling low away !
While Yankee oak bears Yankee hearts
Courageous to the core,
Columbia free shall rule the sea
Britannia ruled of yore.

We 'll bear her flag around the world
In thunder and in flame ;
From pole to pole sublimely roll
The music of her name.

The winds shall pipe her peans loud,
The billows chorus roar ;—
Columbia free shall rule the sea
Britannia ruled of yore.

Is there a haughty foe on earth
Would treat her with disdain ?—
'T were better far that nation were
Whelmed in the mighty main !
Should War her demon dogs unchain,
Or Peace her plenty pour,
Columbia free shall rule the sea
Britannia ruled of yore.

THE OLD FARMER'S ELEGY.

ON a green, grassy knoll by the banks of the brook,
That so long and so often has watered his flock,
The old farmer rests in his long and last sleep,
While the waters a low, lapsing lullaby keep.

He has ploughed his last furrow,—has reaped his last grain,
No morn shall awake him to labor again.

The blue-bird sings sweet on the gay maple bough,—
Its warbling oft cheered him while holding the plough;
And the robins above him hop light on the mold,
For he fed them with crumbs when the season was cold.

He has ploughed his last furrow,—has reaped his last grain,
No morn shall awake him to labor again.

Yon tree, that with fragrance is filling the air,
So rich with its blossoms, so thrifty and fair,
By his own hand was planted, and well did he say
It would live when its planter had mouldered away!
He has ploughed his last furrow,—has reaped his last grain,
No morn shall awake him to labor again.

There 's the well that he dug, with its waters so cold,
With its wet, dripping bucket, so mossy and old,
No more from its depths by the patriarch drawn,
For ' the pitcher is broken,'—the old man is gone !
He has ploughed his last furrow,—has reaped his last grain,
No morn shall awake him to labor again.

And the seat where he sat by his own cottage door,
In the still summer eves, when his labors were o'er,
With his eye on the moon, and his pipe in his hand,
Dispensing his truths like a sage of the land.
He has ploughed his last furrow,—has reaped his last grain,
No morn shall awake him to labor again.

'T was a gloom-giving day when the old farmer died !
The stout-hearted mourned,—the affectionate cried ;
And the prayers of the just for his rest did ascend,
For they all lost a BROTHER, a MAN, and a FRIEND.
He has ploughed his last furrow,—has reaped his last grain,
No morn shall awake him to labor again.

For upright and honest the old farmer was ;
His GOD he revered,—he respected the laws ;
Tho' fameless he lived, he has gone where his worth
Will outshine like pure gold all the dross of this earth.
He has ploughed his last furrow,—has reaped his last grain,
No morn shall awake him to labor again.

JULY FOURTH.

THIS is the morn—the glorious morn
When FREEDOM nerved for strife ;
Put to her lips her clarion horn
And woke a land to life !
Then let the bell its music swell,—
The gun its thunder chime !
This day of days our children's praise
Shall have to latest time.

This is the morn—the glorious morn
Broke scepter and the rod ;
When freemen faced a tyrant's scorn
And thanked ALMIGHTY GOD !
Then let the bell, &c.

This is the morn—the glorious morn
Dispelled Oppression's night ;
When LIBERTY, the heaven-born,
Baptized us into light.
Then let the bell, &c.

This is the day—the blessed day
That first our flag unfurled ;
Spread forth its starry folds to play,—
The wonder of the world.
Then let the bell, &c.

This is the day—the blessed day
When every patriot should
Think on his sires' victorious way
Thro' terrors, fire, and blood !
Then let the bell, &c.

This is the day—the blessed day
Whose memories shall burn
Bright on my heart, till shrouding clay
Shall 'dust to dust' return !
Then let the bell its music swell—
The gun its thunder chime !
This day of days our children's praise
Shall have to latest time.

THE OLD POD-AUGER DAYS.

I SAW an aged man at work—
He turned an auger round ;
And ever and anon he 'd pause,
And meditate profound.
Good morning, friend, quoth I to him,—
Art thinking when to *raise* ?
O, no ! said he, I 'm thinking on
The old ' pod-auger days.'

True, by the hardest then we wrought,
With little extra aid ;
But honor's were the things we bought,
And honor's those we made.
But now invention stalks abroad,
Deception dogs her ways ;
Things different are from what they were
In old ' pod-auger days.'

Then homely was the fare we had,
And homespun what we wore ;
Then scarce a niggard pulled the string
Inside his cabin door.

Then humbugs did n't fly so thick
As half the world to haze ;
That sort of bug was scarcely known
In old ' pod-auger days.'

Then men were strong, and woman fair
Was hearty as the doe ;
Then few so dreadful ' feeble' were,
They could n't knit and sew ;
Then girls could sing, and they could work,
And thrum gridiron lays ;
That sort of music took the palm
In old ' pod-auger days.'

Then men were patriots—rare, indeed,
An *Arnold* or a *Burr* ;
They loved their country, and in turn
Were loved and blessed by her.
Then Franklin, Sherman, Rittenhouse
Earned well the nation's praise ;
We've not the Congress that we had
In old ' pod-auger days.'

Then, ' slow and certain ' was the word ;
Now, ' dei'l the hindmost take ;'
Then buyers rattled down the *tin* ;
Now, words must payment make ;
Then, murder-doing villians soon
Were decked in hempen bays ;
We did n't *murder in our sleep*,
In old ' pod-auger days.'

So wags the world ;—'t is well enough,
If Wisdom went by steam ;
But in my day she used to drive
A plain old-fashioned team ;
And Justice with her bandage off
Can now see choice in ways ;
She used to sit blind-fold and stern
In old ' pod-auger days.'

‘HOE OUT YOUR ROW.’

ONE lazy day a farmer's boy
Was hoeing out the corn,
And moodily had listened long
To hear the dinner horn.
The welcome blast was heard at last,
And down he dropt his hoe ;
But goodman shouted in his ear,
Hoe out your row !—O,
Hoe out your row !

Altho' a 'hard one' was the row,
To use a ploughman phrase,
And the 'lad, as sailors have it,
Beginning well to 'haze,'—
'I can,' said he, and manfully
He seized again his hoe ;
And goodman smiled to see the boy
Hoe out his row,—O,
Hoe out his row.

The lad the text remembered long,
And proved the moral well,
That perseverance to the end
At last will nobly tell.
Take courage, man! resolve you *can*,
And strike a vig'rous blow,
In life's great field of varied toil
Hoe out your row,—O,
Hoe out your row.

WASHING BY THE BROOK.

WHERE the alders girt a grassy
Leaf-embowered nook,
There I spied a cottage lassie
Washing by the brook.

Bright the wavelets glanced beside her,
Brighter was the look
That she gave to him who spied her
Washing by the brook.

Sweet the songs of birds around her,—
Songs from Nature's book ;
Sweeter hers to him who found her
Washing by the brook.

Heaven bless her ! heaven watch her !
Pride may overlook
But for graces never match her,
Washing by the brook.

‘ WHERE GENTLE HOUS-A-TONIC THREADS.’

WHERE gentle Hous-a-ton-ic threads
Its pathway to the sea,
It mirrors many a flow’ret sweet
And many a noble tree.
The flowers are the maidens fair,
Old Berkshire’s boast and pride ;
And manhood is the lofty tree
Fast by the water side.

High tower the hills above the vale
Where Housatonic flows ;
There free the breeze of summer plays,
And pure are winter’s snows.
But freer is the honest hand
That tills the soil below ;
And purer is the maiden there
Than the unsullied snow.

Firm stand Tigh-con-ic’s tablets high
O’er Housatonic’s plain,
And Time upon their solid base
Shall try his scythe in vain.
But firmer is the spirit bold
That Berkshire’s freemen show ;
And fame shall sing of Berkshire’s fair
While time and water flow.

ASHUELOT RIVER.

AIR :—‘ Afton Water.’

GLIDE on, Ash-u-c-lot, with music to hail
And join the bright stream of my own native vale !
I list to thy murmurs, I hear thee deplore
The nation that named thee ; they see thee no more.

How sweet in the autumn to stray by thy side,
Beneath the smooth beeches that drink of thy tide !
To hear the wind sigh for the wild sylvan chief,
And faint, dreamy knell of the slow-falling leaf !

Here came the dark maiden, in days that are flown,
When painted for battle her warrior had gone,—
To muse o’er thy waters, to hear in their flow
The accents of pleasure, or sobbings of woe.

When bright shone the moon, and the bough scarcely stir’d,
And th’ wolf’s lonely howl from Monadnock was heard,
She saw in thy mantle of mist, chill and gray,
The ghost of her warrior rise wreathing away.

Still plays in the breeze, as of yore, thy light wave,
But on thy green banks all unknown is her grave ;
The ploughboy turns, whistling, some mouldering bone,—
Here still flow thy waters,—her grave is unknown.

Glide on, Ashuelot, with music to hail
And swell the bright flood of my own native vale ;
I list to thy murmurs, I hear thee deplore
The nation that loved thee ; they see thee no more.

LEYDEN GLEN.

WHEN first thro' lonely Leyden Glen
I went the wild surveying,
Its channel'd rocks, its sylvan glooms,
Its brawling torrent playing ;
I there an aged man espied,
Beneath a hemlock sitting,
His gaze was on the bubbles bright
That round its roots were flitting.

‘Beneath this tree,’ the old man said,
‘A maiden and her lover
Once met and linked the tender vows
That death alone may sever.
They saw the future thro’ the eye
Of hope’s enchanting vision ;
And all the world before them lay
A beauteous field elysian.

‘Tho’ we on pleasures past may look,
Or backward turn with sorrow,
What know we, creatures of to day,
About the future’s morrow ?
The maid in all her purity
Went, years ago, to glory ;
I yet am here, but youth and love
Have with her fled before me.’

S O N G .

‘Where Liberty dwells, there is my country.’—FRANKLIN.

FROM where Penobscot's flood reflects
The morning's ruddy beams,
To lone Itaska lake that feeds
The infant King of Streams,—
Vast region ! from whose ample midst
Niagara's anthem swells :
Here is the home of LIBERTY,
And here her spirit dwells.

A voice is in each nameless brook,
Each river of our land ;
Amidst the mountains, Titan piled,
That loom cloud-capt and grand ;
The breeze that rolls the prairie wave,
This voiceful hymning tells :
Here is the home of LIBERTY,
And here her spirit dwells.

Within the shieling on the hill,
The hamlet in the vale ;
Within the mart whence commerce sets
The snowy, seaward sail ;
Within our hearts, my countrymen,
A conscious feeling tells :
Here is the home of LIBERTY,
And here her spirit dwells.

LINES ADDRESSED TO 'OLD KNICK.'*

Not to the celebrated devil,
Not NICK, thou big, hope-blasting weevil,
Embodying all we know of evil ;—
 No ! Goodness bless me !
Thou 'lt have to use me far more civil,
 Ere I address thee.

But thou who dwell'st in Gotham city,
The MAN, warm-hearted, wise, and witty,
Thou who first read my rustic ditty,
 First called me BARD !
(The holy truth will sure acquit thee
 In that regard.)

Tho' not thy namesake's kin or pet,
There's something *weird* about you, yet ;
What *Editor* before could set
 So rich a '*Table ?*'
Where could mere human body get
 The wherewith-able ?

* L. GAYLORD CLARK, Esq., editor of the venerable and valuable Knickerbocker Magazine ;—both himself and Maga familiarly and facetiously styled at times by their thousand admirers, 'Knick' or 'Old Knick.' Mr. CLARK first bestowed upon the author the *nom de plume* 'Peasant-Bard.'—See Knickerbocker Mag. vol. xxxi, page 183.

Oh, had I but thy facile pen !
Thy fancy to direct it !—then
I'd hope to win from fellow men
A lofty name ;
And leave life's mediocral fen
For ' braes o' fame !'

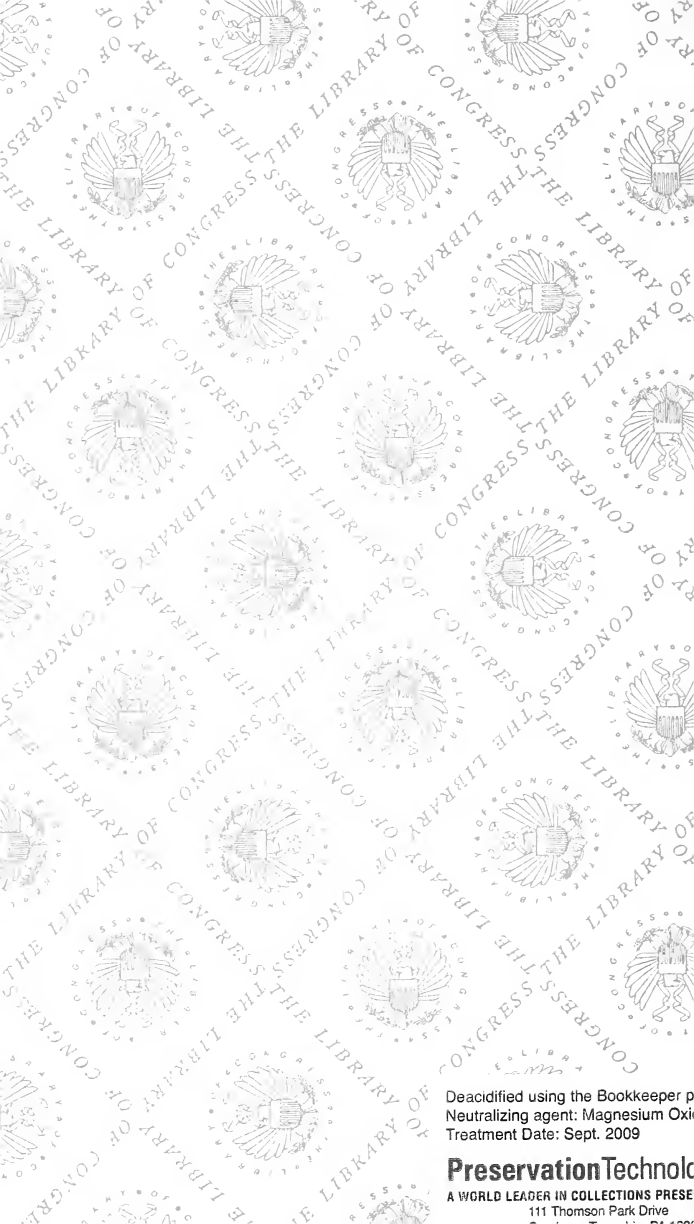
I'm coming out an author, now,
In book yclept ' The Harp and Plow.'
Hopes, fears ; fears, hopes ; around my brow,
Weeds twine, or bays :
But, hit or miss, I'll make my bow
One of these days.

My book ! with trembling I shall show it,
Lest you annihilate the poet ;
But should you any praise bestow it,
Content I am,
Tho' every other critic blow it
To Rotterd—m.*

But by thy worth, and fancy fine,
By that small share which may be mine,
By all the favors of the NINE,
In store, or given,
I wish thee, CLARK, for thee and thine,
The smiles of Heaven.

* This mode of writing *profane* proper names is CLARK's own.





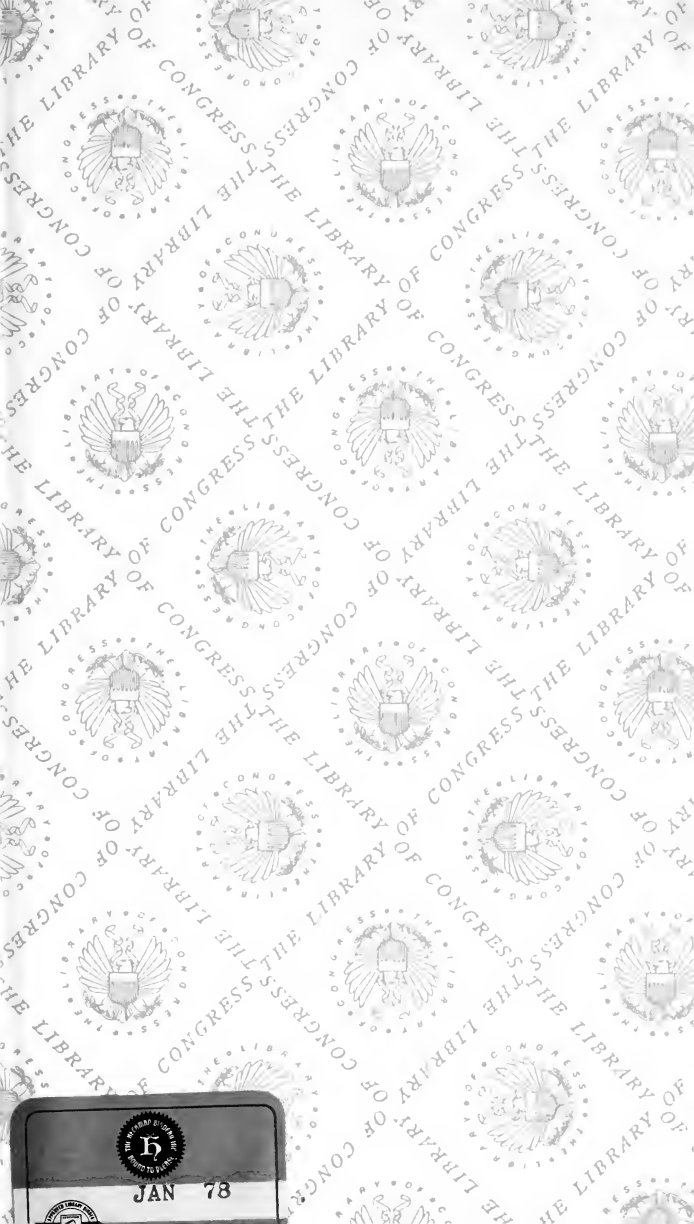
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